

WEIRD! FANTA

ASTOUNDING!

PAGE

BAFFLING

NO. 20

10c

MYSTERIES

DECIDE! RETURN THE JEWEL
OF THE *PYGMY GOD* -- OR YOU
TOO SHALL BE MADE MY
PYGMY SLAVE!



INTROD G Comfo-Gard

THE AMAZING NEW MENSTRUAL SHIELD THAT GIVES SURE, SAFE PROTECTION DIFFERENTLY

Yes, here it is—look at the illustration and see at once why Comfo-Gard is different. Comfo-Gard looks like and is an abbreviated pantie—except Comfo-Gard is especially cut to hug the body contours. Comfo-Gard is made of finest fabric and elastic materials and is lined with sheepest, softest rubber to make it liquid repellent.

NO PINS — NO HOOKS

Comfo-Gard eliminates pins and hooks. "No-slip" loops hold the napkin securely without pins or hooks. You'll enjoy this extra freedom from annoyances.

ELIMINATES CHAFING

Comfo-Gard's wide crotch keeps the pad flat and smooth all the time. The elastic band hugs the hips, thus eliminating one of the most common causes of chafing.

NO TELL-TALE BUMPS

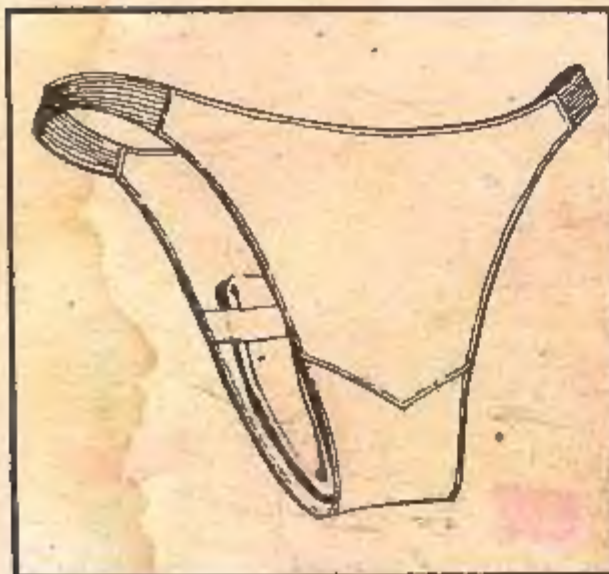
Comfo-Gard's special form-fit design completely does away with tell-tale bumps.

NO STAINS — NO OVERFLOW

The special sheer soft rubber lining makes soiling or overflowing impossible. For the first time you'll really feel safe.

LONG LIFE — WASHES IN A JIFFY

Comfo-Gard will give years of good service. Washes in a jiffy and dries almost instantly. Try Comfo-Gards today.



USE COMFO-GARDS AS PANTIES OTHER TIMES

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TRY COMFO-GARDS 60 DAYS FREE . . . SEND NO MONEY

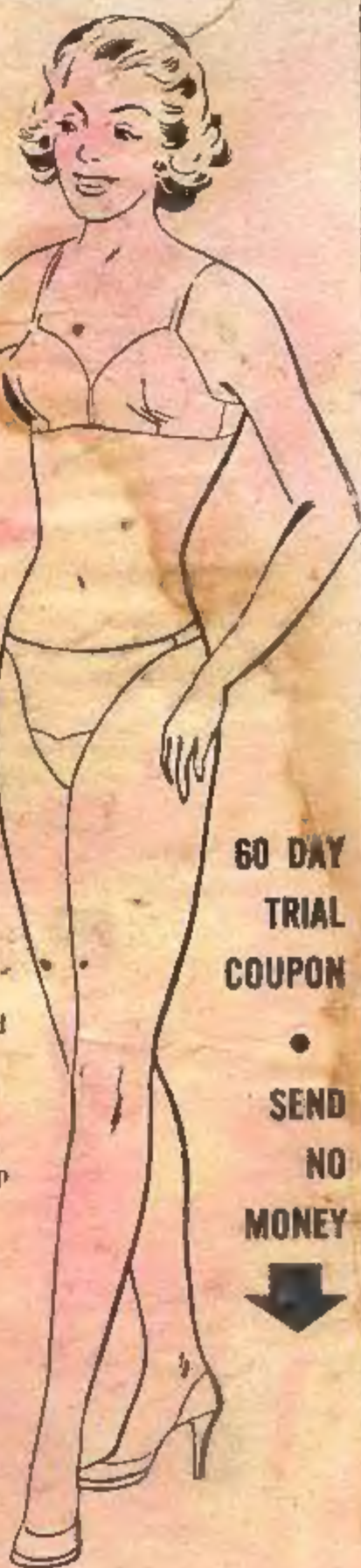
Here is our offer:—fill out the coupon below and mail in. We'll rush Comfo-Gards to you in an unmarked package. Take 60 days to decide whether you wish to keep Comfo-Gards. If not a full refund of the purchase price will be made immediately.

60 DAY TRIAL COUPON

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SEND
NO
MONEY



2 FOR
\$1.98



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Address.....

City.....Zone.....State.....

☐ Check here if you enclose \$1.98 and we pay postage. Same refund offer holds.

THE MAZE MASTER

MORE THAN THE CRAVING FOR POWER, RICHES, FAME — VICTOR RARLO WAS TORMENTED BY AN INSATIABLE NEED TO PLAY VICIOUS GAMES... GAMES IN WHICH LIFE OR DEATH WAS THE STAKE. AND TO SATISFY THIS STRANGE CRAVING, HE CONCOCTED FIENDISH MAZES AND PUZZLES... IN WHICH HUMAN SOULS WERE HIS GUINEA PIGS, AND THE GRIES OF THE ANGUISHED HIS UNHOLY PLEASURE. TILL FINALLY HE WAS TRAPPED IN THE LAST MACABRE GAME... FROM WHICH THERE WAS NO ESCAPE!



IN ALL OF SOUTH AMERICA, NONE WAS SO FEARED AND HATED AS VICTOR RARLO, FABULOUSLY WEALTHY INDUSTRIALIST AND FINANCIER.

EACH BUSINESS RIVAL PITTED HIS BRAIN, POCKETBOOK AND SKILL AGAINST THE DIABOLICAL RARLO... ONLY TO END UP BROKEN AND RUINED IN THE --MAZE!

MAY YOU ROT FOR YOUR CRUELTY, FAT PIG! I'LL NOT GIVE UP MY BUSINESS TO YOU! NOT EVER!

YOU REMEMBER OUR PACT, GONZALES! AS MY BUSINESS RIVAL, I CAN WIPE YOU OUT... BUT IF YOU SOLVE THE MAZE IN WHICH YOU HAVE ENTERED VOLUNTARILY, YOUR BANK IS YOURS AGAIN!

THE CURSE OF MY FATHER'S HOUSE ON YOU, RARLO! MAY YOU WITHER AND ROT IN A MAZE OF THE DEVIL'S OWN MAKING!



SOON, HOWEVER, RARLO RAN OUT OF BUSINESS RIVALS AND GREW BORED. MONEY PILED UPON MONEY, POWER UPON POWER... UNTIL HIS CRAZED MIND RAN AMOK...

HERE IS THE RECORD BOOK AS YOU WISHED, MASTER. IN ALL THE PROVINCE THERE IS NONE LEFT TO CHALLENGE YOUR MAZE!

THEN SEND ROBERTO HERE WITH A LIST OF NAMES FROM THE OTHER PROVINCES, DOG! MY PATIENCE COMES TO AN END!



BUT WHEN ROBERTO CAME...

I SAID TO BRING THE LIST TO ME, LAZY OAF! MUST I ALWAYS BEAT YOU?

I—I DESTROYED IT, MASTER... / HAVE YOU NOT HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR CRUEL GAMES? / OF YOUR FIENDISH MAZE?!



DESTROYED IT?! YOU! INSOLENT FROM A DOG OF A SERVANT! I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO OBEY! LET ALL MY SERVANTS LEARN FROM YOUR EXAMPLE!

PITY, MASTER! SPARE ME! AIIIEE!



FIENDISH MAZE, YOU SAY! YOU SHALL LEARN HOW FIENDISH IT IS, INSOLENT ONE! IN THE MAZE YOU WILL LEARN! NOW! TO THE MAZE WITH YOU!

NO! NO! HAVE PITY, MIGHTY, O MIGHTY ONE!



BUT SADISTIC RARLO HAD FOUND A NEW VICTIM, AND FIVE DAYS LATER...

FOOD... W-WATER! I BEG YOU. I—I'M DYING... / I CAN'T MOVE... ANOTHER... INCH!

TOO BAD, MY WORTHY! NOW THE HOT SUN WILL BURN THE FLESH OFF YOUR BACK! LOOK ON THIS CARRION, FOOLS... AND REMEMBER THAT WHEN I NEXT GIVE AN ORDER, IT MUST BE OBEYED!



NOW ALL THE EVIL RARLO HAD DONE REACHED THE EXPLODING POINT. THE GOVERNOR COULD NO LONGER IGNORE THE COMPLAINTS OF THE PEOPLE, AND...

THE POLITICO WILL BE HERE SOON, MASTER. YOU MUST HURRY!

BAH! I WILL ESCAPE WHERE EVEN THEY CANNOT HOPE TO TRACE ME! REMEMBER TO PACK MY PUZZLE GAMES AND JIGSAW KITS! I NEED AMUSEMENT!



SO VICTOR RARLO VANISHED INTO THE NIGHT, TAKING HIS WEALTH, POWER AND EVIL WITH HIM. LEGENDS SPRANG UP ABOUT HIS WHEREABOUTS, BUT ALWAYS WITH THE SAME RESULT... NO VERIFICATION, FOR RARLO HAD JOURNEYED THROUGH A HALF DOZEN COUNTRIES INTO...INDIA!



AND IN TIME, HE ROSE INTO PROMINENCE IN THE WILDS OF THE NORTH PROVINCES--RULING WITH AN IRON HAND AND A BLACK HEART--RULING AS A TYRANNICAL RAJAH WHOSE MAIN JOY IN LIFE WAS AGAIN... GAMES AND MAGIC!

SPEAK UP, DOG / WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO AMUSE ME WITH TODAY? I WILL HAVE YOUR LYING TONGUE CUT OUT IF YOU BRING ME SILLY TRICKS!

OH GREAT RAJAH... I OFFER YOU THE GIFT OF THE GENII / YOU WILL INDEED BE SUPREME!



BEHOLD... YOU SHALL HAVE THE MAGIC POWER OF COMMANDING THE DEAD!

BAH / I ASKED YOU FOR PUZZLES... FOR GAMES THAT KNOW NO COMPARISON... AND YOU OFFER ME MORBID PURSUITS!



GET RID OF THIS DOG AND FIND ME SOMEONE WHO CAN BRIGHTEN UP THE WAKING MOMENTS OF MY LIFE!

AIIEE... / NO, GREAT RAJAH / LET ME LIVE / I-I CAN SHOW YOU THE SECRETS OF THE BEYOND!



THUS MAGICIANS, SORCERERS, SOOTHSAYERS AND OTHER CONJURORS FLOCKED TO RARLO'S DOMAIN... NOW MECCA FOR ALL WEIRD AND EERIE RITES. THEN ONE NIGHT AT DINNER...

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY, OH GREAT ONE... IF YOU COULD PENETRATE THE VEIL OF TIME AND SPACE AND SOLVE THE MAZES OF ANOTHER WORLD SET BEFORE THEE?

I WOULD REWARD YOU WITH MUCH WEALTH, MYSTIC... IF YOU SUCCEEDED IN OFFERING ME A WORTHY CHALLENGE! LET US HEAR FURTHER!



TAKE HEED, MIGHTY RARLO / NONE HAS OVERCOME THE MAZES OF THIS MYSTIC / YOUR SOUL MAY BE FOREVER FORFEIT!

WHILE YOUR BODY REMAINS HERE IN SAFETY, YOUR MIND SHALL TRAVEL TO A DESTINATION ONLY I WILL KNOW. YOUR TASK... TO SOLVE THE MAZE OF YOUR DESTINATION AND RETURN. I WARN THEE AGAIN. IT IS DANGEROUS!

BAH / I FEAR NOTHING / I CAN SOLVE ANY MAZE DE- VISED BY MAN!



SILENCE, FOOLS! I AM TIRED OF STUPID PUZZLES I CAN EASILY SOLVE. I CRAVE A CHALLENGE WORTHY OF ME!



BUT THE STRANGE MYSTIC HAD ALREADY GONE INTO A TRANCE... AND NOW, AS THE OMINOUS WORDS OF AN EERIE SPELL POURED FORTH FROM HIS LIPS, A VAPOUR TOOK HOLD OF VICTOR RARLO... A VAPOUR THAT SENT HIM REELING INTO THE MISTS OF THE BEYOND!

RARLO... RARLO... COME / COME / COME STRAIGHT INTO THE WEB! HA HA HA HA HA!

FEEL SO NUMB... SO STRANGE...



MOCKING LAUGHTER, FLASHES OF BLINDING LIGHT... AND WRAITHLIKE FIGURES WATCHED THE DESCENT OF A MORTAL SOUL PLUMMETING THROUGH THE GATEWAY OF THE MAZE / AND AN EON LATER, RARLO AWOKE!

MY HEAD...BUZZING WITH STRANGE SOUNDS... GROUND FEELS SPONGY AND SOFT. THERE'S NOTHING HERE BUT A VAST EMPTINESS!



MORTAL...ABANDON YE HOPE / THERE IS NO ESCAPE... NO ESCAPE!

OUT OF NOTHING...INTO NOTHING / NOTHING / NOTHING RULES HERE! WE ARE NOTHINGNESS! BE AS ONE OF US! FORGET! COMPLETE HAPPINESS SHALL BE YOURS! FORGET!

NO / STAY AWAY!



IT WILL BE SO EASY...! NOTHING...NOTHING... EVERYTHING IS NOTHING! STAY! FORGET!

(PUFF!) THERE MUST BE A WAY OUT OF HERE! (PUFF!) CAN'T LET THEM HOLD ME!

THERE IS NO WAY OUT! EVERY SOLUTION WILL LEAD YOU TO... NOTHINGNESS! SOON... SOON YOU SHALL BE ONE OF US! HA HA!

SMOKE IS CHOKING ME / UGH / CAN'T GET FREE / I--I'VE GOT TO THINK OF A WAY OUT! GOT TO!



WAIT! I'VE FOUND THE SOLUTION! I'VE SOLVED THE MAZE! THE ONLY WAY OUT OF NOTHINGNESS IS TO THINK OF NOTHING... AND DO NOTHING! I'VE WON!

AIE! THE MORTAL ESCAPES! WE ARE LOST! LOST!

AND SUDDENLY...AS THE MISTS CLOSED IN ABOUT HIM, RARLO FOUND HIMSELF BACK AT THE COURTYARD!

WELL DONE, MYSTIC... BUT I'VE SOLVED YOUR MAZE! I'VE RETURNED TO SHOW YOU THAT NOTHING CAN STOP VICTOR RARLO!

INDEED YOU HAVE REMARKABLE SKILL, SIRE... FOR THE MAZE YOU FOUND YOURSELF IN WAS THE BLANK MIND OF AN AMNESIAC!

THIS HAS ONLY WHETTED MY APPETITE, NECROMANCER! I ORDER YOU TO TRANSPORT ME INTO A DIFFERENT MAZE / YOUR POCKETS SHALL BE FILLED WITH GOLD IF YOU DO!

I DESIRE ONLY THY PLEASURE, MASTER. SO BE IT! ARISE, YE WANDERING SPIRITS! WAIL, YE EVIL WINDS! ...AND LET THE VEIL BE PARTED!



A REVOLVING WHIRLPOOL...
A MOANING CACOPHONY OF
HISSING NOISE / THEN FURY
AND HORROR SUPREME / FOR
THE VEIL OF TIME AND SPACE
WAS ONCE MORE TORN
ASUNDER

THE ROAD MAY LEAD TO A WAY
OUT... OR THEN AGAIN IT MAY NOT—
JUST AS LAST TIME... / BUT I
CAN'T SEEM TO GET AHEAD. THE
MORE I WALK... THE LONGER
THE ROAD GETS... /

MOMENTS LATER...

A MORTAL IN OUR
DOMAIN / ATTACK HIM,
BROTHERS / WE SHALL
FEAST ON HIS HEART
AND BRAINS /
HA HA /

NOW I—I'M
CLIMBING A
MOUNTAIN /
THOSE
THINGS BEHIND
ME—ARE DANGEROUS /
BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO
REACH THE TOP /

THE BEYOND / GREAT SCOTT /
WHERE AM I THIS TIME? WHAT
FANTASTIC LANDSCAPE IS THIS?
BUT I MUST GATHER MY WITS
IF I'M TO SOLVE THIS
PUZZLE /



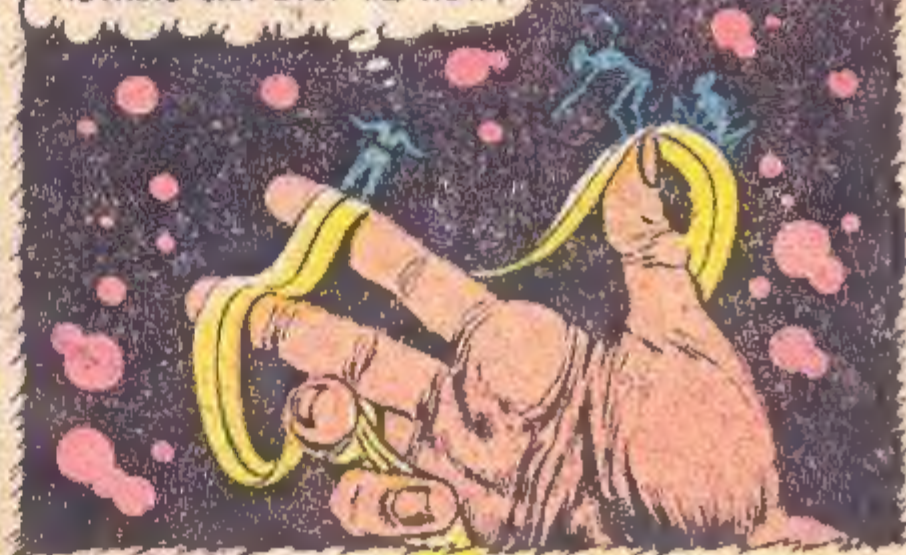
FASTER, BROTHERS...
FASTER / WE ARE ALMOST
UPON HIM /

THE ROAD...IT—IT'S
STRETCHING BEFORE
MY VERY EYES / IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO
FIND A WAY OUT, UNLESS...



I HAVE IT / THE KEY TO THIS MAZE
IS ILLOGICAL REASONING! YES,
THAT'S IT / THE SHORTEST WAY
OUT OF HERE...IS THE LONGEST
WAY / IN ORDER TO REACH THE
OTHER END OF THE ROAD, I HAVE
TO GO THE OPPOSITE WAY!
NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW /

SEIZE HIM
BEFORE HE CAN
LEAVE / HE IS
FADING!
STOP /



AND AGAIN THE FAMILIAR SETTINGS OF THE
REAL WORLD MERGED INTO THE CONSCIOUSNESS
OF RARLO'S BRAIN

THIS MAZE WAS MORE
DIFFICULT, MYSTIC...
BUT STILL NOT ENOUGH
TO CONQUER ME /

IT IS NOT OFTEN MEN
CAN RETURN SAFELY
FROM THE MIND OF
THE HOPELESSLY
INSANE, GREAT ONE...
FOR THAT WAS YOUR
MAZE /



AND NOW...ONE FINAL MAZE,
MYSTIC! AND THEN YOUR
FORTUNE SHALL BE MADE!
I WILL PROVE TO THE
WORLD THAT THE MIND OF
VICTOR RARLO CANNOT
BE OVERWHELMED /

STOP, SIRE! IT IS
MADNESS! WE SHALL
NOT BE HELD RESPON-
SIBLE FOR YOUR RETURN!
YOU ARE DEFYING THE
UNKNOWN /



I WILL DIE THROUGH NATURAL CAUSES. THIS MYSTIC SHALL NOT BE TOUCHED... PROVIDED HE DOES NOT KILL ME WITH HIS OWN HANDS/ STAND BACK IF YOU ARE AFRAID... BECAUSE I'M NOT!

AWAKEN, YE VOLCANIC DEMONS/ BURST FORTH, YE CURRENTS OF DARKNESS/ I SEND THEE A MORTAL SOUL!



THE HEAVENS ERUPTED... THUNDER CRASHED THROUGH THE MIND OF VICTOR RARLO... AND AS THE BLACKNESS PARTED...

WHY... IT'S A PARADISE/ NEVER IN MY WILDEST DREAMS HAVE I EVER IMAGINED A PLACE LIKE THIS/ WONDER WHAT'S BEHIND THIS LEDGE...?



HE'S HERE/ AT LAST/ WE HAVE HIM IN OUR MIDST/ WELCOME, VICTOR/ WELCOME TO... DOOM!

ALIEE!
WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?
WHERE AM I?



CAN'T YOU GUESS, VICTOR? WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU A LONG TIME!

THE LANDSCAPE'S MELTING/ IT'S FORMING INTO ANOTHER... MUCH MORE HORRIBLE PLACE/ I—I CAN'T BE THERE!



NO VICTOR/ YOU ARE NOT IN HADES... FOR THAT IS TOO EASY A FATE FOR YOU/ VENTURE ANOTHER GUESS, VICTOR/ HA HA/ SEE HOW HE SUFFERS!

I'M IN THE MIND OF A DEAD MAN/ THAT'S IT/ THAT'S GOT TO BE IT!



PARTLY TRUE, VICTOR/ BUT IF THAT IS CORRECT, THE DEAD COULD NOT BE MORE POWERFUL THAN THE LIVING/ AND SOON... VERY SOON... YOU SHALL BE ONE OF US!

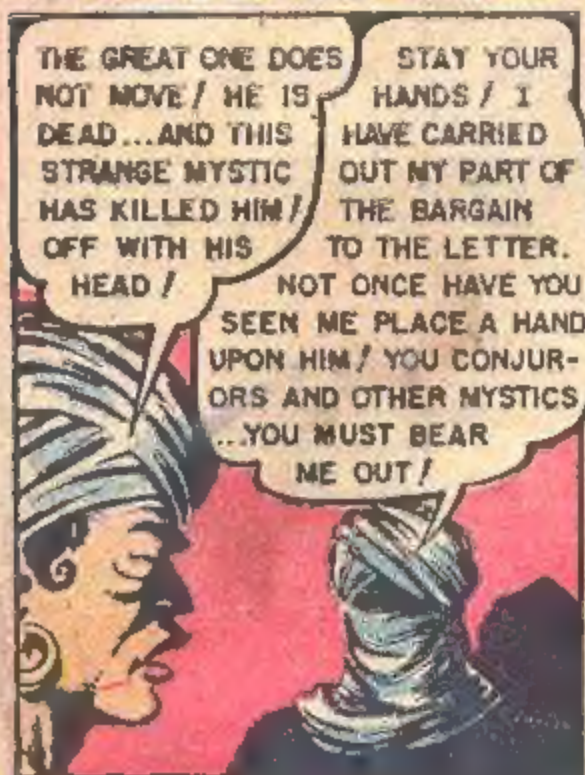
W—WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? LET ME DOWN/ I—I CAN'T THINK/ LET ME GO!



WE GRANT YOU YOUR WISH, FOOLISH MORTAL/ GO TO YOUR DESTINATION/ YOU HAVE LOST YOUR BATTLE AGAINST THIS MAZE/ HA HA!

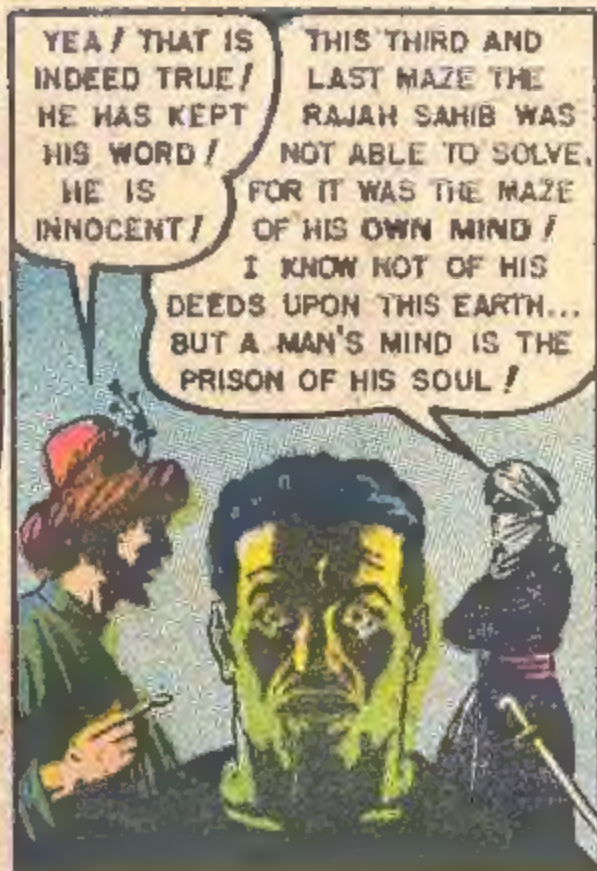


SECONDS AFTERWARDS, IN THE
COURTYARD OF VICTOR RARLO...



THE GREAT ONE DOES NOT MOVE / HE IS DEAD...AND THIS STRANGE MYSTIC HAS KILLED HIM / OFF WITH HIS HEAD /

STAY YOUR HANDS / I HAVE CARRIED OUT MY PART OF THE BARGAIN TO THE LETTER. NOT ONCE HAVE YOU SEEN ME PLACE A HAND UPON HIM / YOU CONJURORS AND OTHER MYSTICS...YOU MUST BEAR ME OUT!



YEA / THAT IS INDEED TRUE / HE HAS KEPT HIS WORD / HE IS INNOCENT /

THIS THIRD AND LAST MAZE THE RAJAH SAHIB WAS NOT ABLE TO SOLVE. FOR IT WAS THE MAZE OF HIS OWN MIND / I KNOW NOT OF HIS DEEDS UPON THIS EARTH... BUT A MAN'S MIND IS THE PRISON OF HIS SOUL!



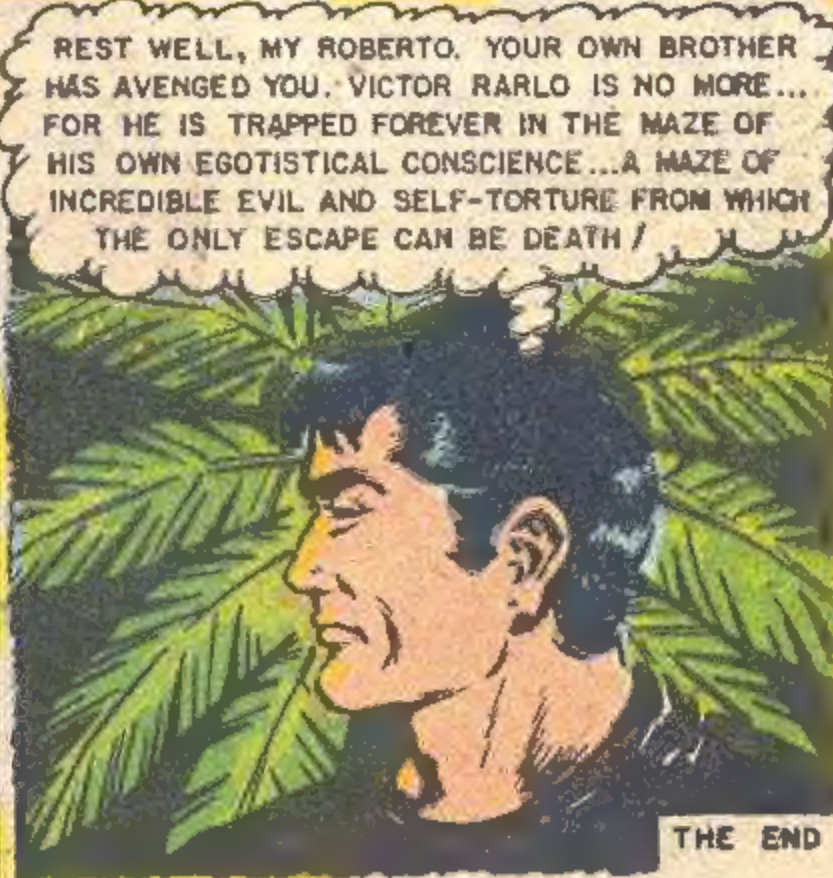
BUT IS HE REALLY DEAD? SURELY YOU CAN CAST ANOTHER SPELL AND DRAW HIM BACK TO THE WORLD OF THE LIVING!

HE IS NOT DEAD --BUT HE WILL NEVER BE SUMMONED BACK HERE AGAIN THOUGH I CAST A HUNDRED SPELLS! THAT IS THE FATE OF THOSE WHO WOULD CHALLENGE THE MAZE OF THEIR OWN MINDS / TAKE YE THE GOLD / MY REWARD HAS BEEN GIVEN ME / I BID THEE FAREWELL!

SLOWLY, A MAN WALKS DOWN A FOREST ROAD. SLOWLY, HE UNWINDS A TURBAN FROM HIS HEAD-- AND HERE AND THERE ARE PATCHES OF WHITE SKIN SHOWING WHERE THE MASK ON HIS FACE HAS RUBBED OFF THE PAINT.



IT IS TIME TO STAND REVEALED. FIVE YEARS OF PURSUIT ARE OVER / MY OCCULT STUDIES HAVE NOT BEEN IN VAIN!



REST WELL, MY ROBERTO. YOUR OWN BROTHER HAS AVENGED YOU. VICTOR RARLO IS NO MORE... FOR HE IS TRAPPED FOREVER IN THE MAZE OF HIS OWN EGOTISTICAL CONSCIENCE...A MAZE OF INCREDIBLE EVIL AND SELF-TORTURE FROM WHICH THE ONLY ESCAPE CAN BE DEATH!

THE END

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1932, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233)

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2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Periodical House, Inc., 23 West 47th Street, New York 36, N. Y.; A. A. Wyn, 23 West 47th Street, New York 36, N. Y.; Rose Wyn, 23 West 47th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

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4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

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A. A. WYN

(Signature of editor, publisher, business manager or owner)

to and subscribed before me this 21st day of September, 1953.

ETTA HARDT, Notary Public
My Commission Expires March 30, 1955.

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

33

WHEN CIVILIZATION BEGAN ITS MARCH INTO THE MECHANICAL AGE LATE IN THE 19TH CENTURY, THE PARIS EXPOSITION BECAME THE CENTER OF WORLD ATTENTION. ASIDE FROM THE SERIOUS PURPOSES OF THE EXPOSITION, THE AMUSEMENT SECTION OF THE FAIR ALSO TOOK ITS PLACE IN WORLD HISTORY... THE DIRECTORS OF THE FAIR MET TO PLAN THE ENTERTAINMENT SECTION EXHIBITION



WE MUST HAVE SOMETHING THRILLING, DYNAMIC, FOR THE AMUSEMENT AREA. SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

THERE IS A MAN OUTSIDE WHO INSISTS HE HAS A REVOLUTIONARY IDEA FOR THE AMUSEMENT GROUNDS!

IF IT'S DIFFERENT, WE MUST SEE IT. SEND HIM IN.



A STRANGE LOOKING MAN ENTERED AND SHOWED PLANS FOR A HOUSE OF HORROR HE WISHED TO BUILD...

THESE MONSTERS I HAVE CREATED WILL BE THE TALK OF THE UNIVERSE. HERE ARE THE DRAWINGS OF MY DESIGNS.

T-THEY ARE THE MOST GRUESOME THINGS I HAVE EVER SEEN...

YES, BUT IT WILL BE A WONDERFUL ATTRACTION!



I WILL PERSONALLY TAKE YOU ON A PRIVATE TOUR OF MY "HADES"!

I-- IT'S FRIGHTENING... INGENIOUS!



YOU ARE IN MY POWER NOW! THIS IS MY "HADES"... HA, HA, HA, HA!!

Y-YOU'RE INSANE!

THE MONSTERS... THEY'RE MOVING... AAAA!!!



THE CROWD OUTSIDE COULD ONLY IMAGINE THE TERRIBLE SCENE THAT WAS TAKING PLACE IN THE HOUSE OF HORROR BY THE SOUNDS COMING FROM IT...

WHEN THE POLICE RUSHED INTO THE CHAMBER, THEY CAME UPON A SCENE BEYOND THE REALM OF REALITY. THE DIRECTORS STOOD TREMBLING, STARK RAVING MAD. THE MONSTERS AND THE STRANGE MAN WHO CREATED THEM HAD COMPLETELY VANISHED! THE DIRECTORS NEVER RECOVERED FROM THE TERRIFYING EXPERIENCE THEY HAD GONE THROUGH. ONLY THEIR WRECKED MINDS REMAINED AS MUTE TESTIMONY TO THE AFFAIR THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE "HOUSE OF HORROR"! THE END



Tune of the Zombie Queen

EAGER FOR FAME AND FORTUNE, GAIETY AND EXCITEMENT, THE GREEDY YOUNG OFTEN SEEK TO WRENCH OPEN DANGEROUS AND MYSTERIOUS DOORS THAT THEY BELIEVE WILL LEAD THEM TO THEIR HEARTS' DESIRES SUCH WERE TWO YOUNG DANCERS WHO WROTE THEIR OWN STRANGE STORY WHEN THEY TAMPERED WITH WEIRD AND UNKNOWN FORCES. . .

DORIS GIBBS AND FERDIE DYSON HAD STARTED OUT WITH HIGH HOPES THAT WERE WEARING A LITTLE THIN.

AND YOU TOLD ME SHOW BUSINESS WOULD BE A PUSHOVER FOR US! BUT HERE WE ARE, STRANDED IN NEW ORLEANS, WHILE AN OLD HAG WITH A CREEPY PARTNER PULLS DOWN THOUSANDS A WEEK BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT SOMETHING "DIFFERENT"!

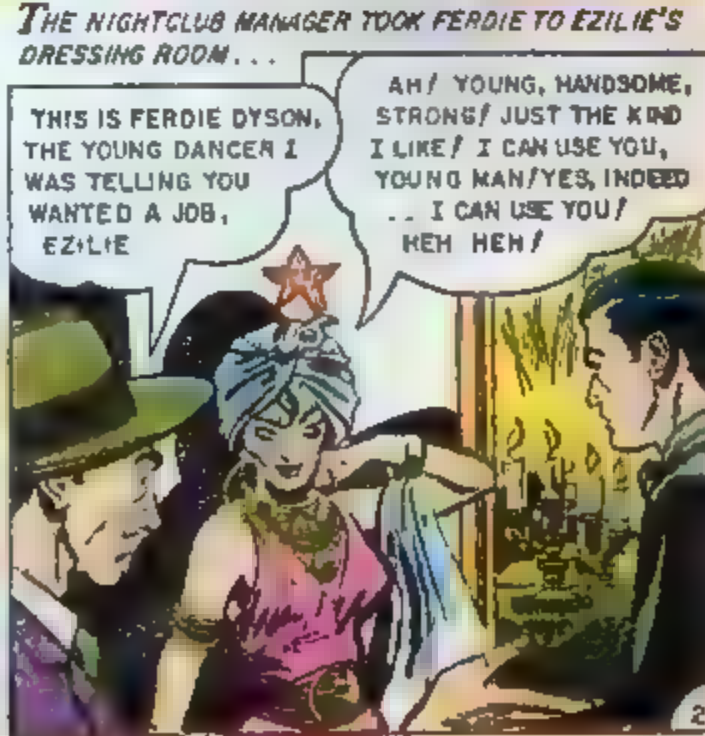
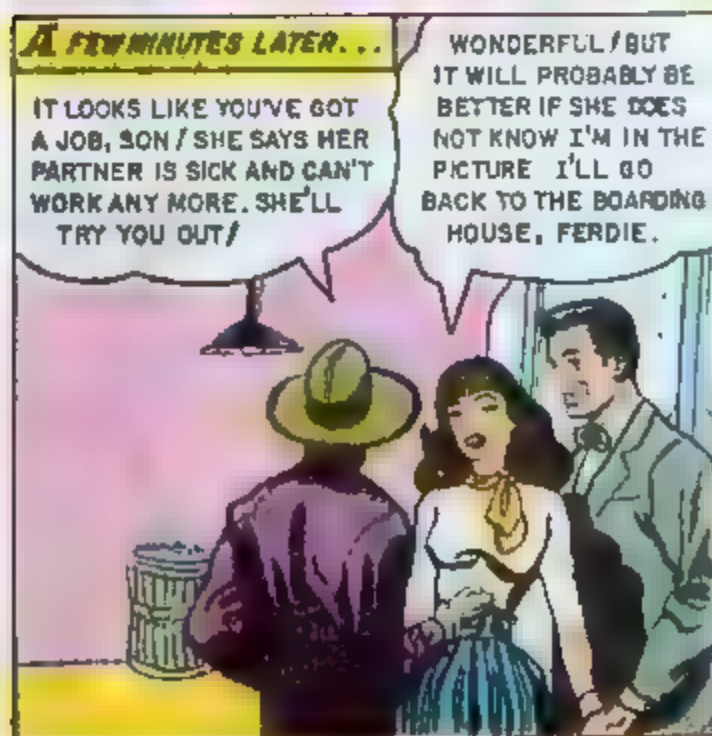
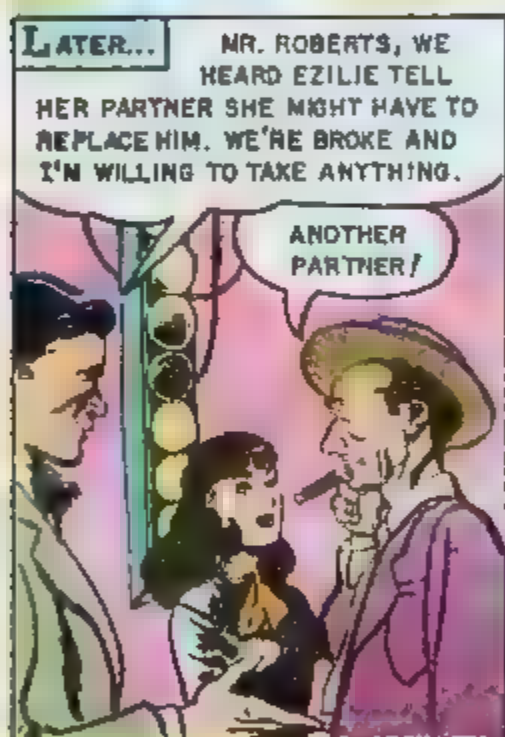


SHE REALLY PUTS ON A PERFORMANCE! AND WHAT A MAKE-UP ON BOTH OF THEM!

THOSE ARE REAL JEWELS, FERDIE! WHEN I THINK OF HOW THEY WOULD LOOK ON ME!

YOU ARE SLOWING DOWN, PEDRO! I FEAR I WILL HAVE TO GET A NEW PARTNER!





AFTER THE MANAGER LEFT, FERDIE HAD A STRANGE FEELING ABOUT BEING ALONE WITH EZILIE...

I DON'T THINK I'LL HAVE ANY TROUBLE LEARNING THE ROUTINE, BUT THE MAKE-UP YOUR PARTNERS WEAR IS REALLY SOMETHING! YOU'LL HAVE TO TEACH ME THE TRICK OF IT.



THEY LOOK ALMOST LIKE REAL ZOMBIES... IF THERE WAS SUCH A THING AS A ZOMBIE!

SO YOU DO NOT BELIEVE ZOMBIES EXIST, MY FRIEND? PERHAPS IT IS JUST AS WELL THAT YOU DO NOT! BUT LET US DRINK TO THE NEW PARTNERSHIP!



I SAW EZILIE'S REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR WHEN SHE DROPPED SOME KIND OF POWDER IN MY GLASS! WHAT KIND OF A GAME IS SHE PLAYING, I WONDER! I'LL PRETEND I'M DRINKING IT, BUT I'LL GET RID OF IT SOMEHOW!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF POWDER IT WAS, BUT I CAN'T GO TOO FAR WRONG IF I ACT DROWBY AND DOPED!

DRINK UP, YOUNG MAN! AND TOMORROW MORNING I WILL TEACH YOU EVERYTHING YOU MUST LEARN FOR MY ACT!



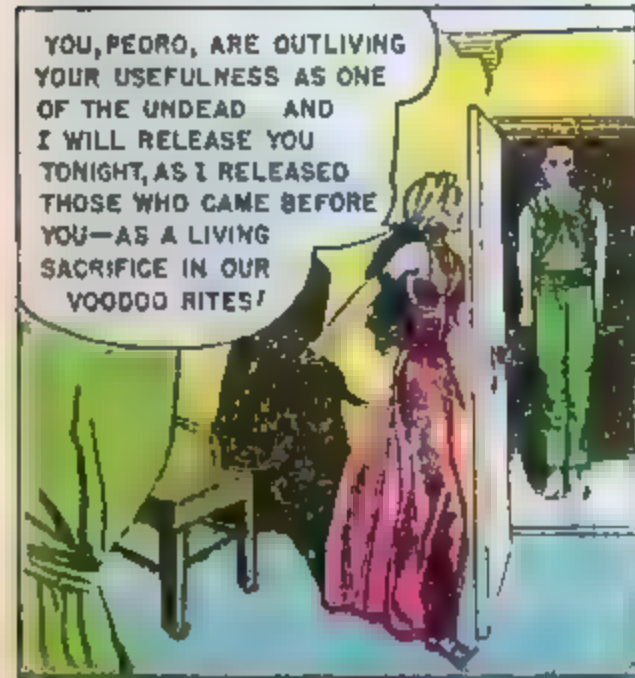
TOMORROW OH.

HEH HEH! THE POTION WORKS AS USUAL! AND BY TOMORROW, FERDIE DYSON, YOU WILL KNOW THAT ZOMBIES DO EXIST BECAUSE YOU WILL TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THEIR RANKS!



PRETENDING TO BE IN A STUPOR, FERDIE WATCHED AND LISTENED IN HORRIFIED BELIEF

YOU, PEDRO, ARE OUTLIVING YOUR USEFULNESS AS ONE OF THE UNDEAD AND I WILL RELEASE YOU TONIGHT, AS I RELEASED THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE YOU—AS A LIVING SACRIFICE IN OUR VOODOO RITES!



PICK UP YOUR SUCCESSOR AND BRING HIM ALONG TONIGHT HE WILL BE INITIATED INTO THE RANKS OF THE LIVING DEAD WHILE YOUR BLOODLESS BODY BURNS ON THE ALTAR AS HIS WILL ALSO BURN SOME DAY

I MUST DO AS YOU COMMAND, MAMALOI, GREAT VOODOO QUEEN!



AS THE ZOMBIE REACHED FOR HIM, FERDIE ACTED...

OH, NO YOU DON'T,
YOU CREEP! I THOUGHT
THERE WAS SOMETHING
PHONY ABOUT THIS
SETUP/DON'T COME
NEAR ME!

SO! YOU THINK YOU
CAN OUTWIT EZILIE,
STUPID ONE! STRANGLE
HIM, PEDRO!



BUT HIS BLOW COULD NOT STOP THE CREATURE...

DO YOU THINK YOUR PUNY STRENGTH COULD
STOP ONE OF THE WALKING DEAD! THIS IS
NOT THE END I HAD IN MIND FOR YOU---
BUT NOW, I WILL FINISH YOU OFF!

ARRGGHH!

FERDIE!



WHAT ARE YOU AND THAT
HORRIBLE PARTNER OF YOURS
TRYING TO DO, YOU AWFUL
OLD HAG?!

PEDRO/
QUICK/
HELP!



**HEARING DORIS' VOICE AS PEDRO
LOOSENED HIS HOLD, FERDIE
PULLED HIMSELF TOGETHER AND
GRABBED THE FALLEN CHAIR...**

THIS MAY NOT STOP YOU,
ZOMBIE BUT IT WILL
SLOW YOU UP!



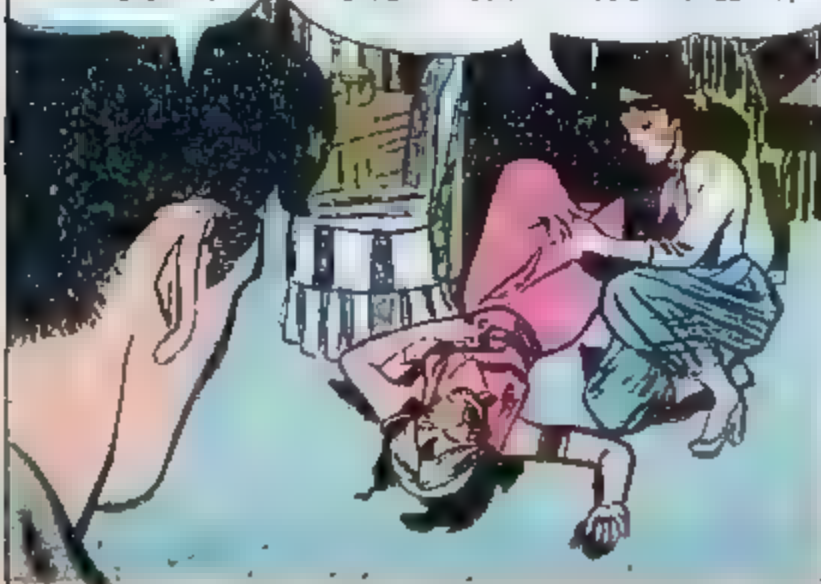
**MEANWHILE, DORIS HAD LUCKILY
FORCED BACK EZILIE'S ARM**

ALERT!



DORIS/ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT? HOW
DID YOU HAPPEN
TO COME BACK?

YOU---YOU WERE GONE SO LONG, I
GOT WORRIED. I WALKED BACK HERE
AND THEN I HEARD A NOISE---YOUR
VOICE IN AGONY--- SO I RUSHED IN!



FERDIE! SHE---SHE'S DEAD/
HER BLOOD... IT'S ALL OVER
ME! YOU, TOO! NOW! UGH/
LET'S GET AWAY FROM
HERE!



SHE HAD IT COMING TO HER! SHE WAS SOME KIND OF A VOOODOO QUEEN AND SHE WOULD HAVE KILLED ME... OR WORSE... AND YOU, TOO! THAT THING IS A ZOMBIE. AND NOW THAT SHE'S DEAD, HE SEEMS TO HAVE LOST HIS POWER!



SHE OWES US PLENTY FOR WHAT SHE TRIED TO DO TO ME. SAY, THAT'S A FORTUNE IN JEWELS SHE'S GOT ON, NOT TO MENTION THE FACT THAT SHE'S A HEAD-LINE ACT. IF WE GET RID OF HER AND THE ZOMBIE, WE CAN TAKE OVER FROM THERE!



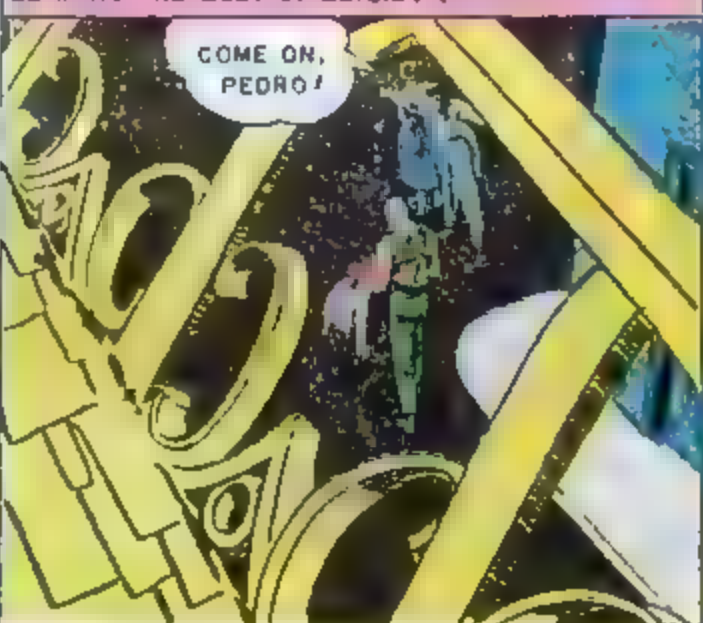
THE POLICE WOULD NEVER BELIEVE OUR STORY! WITH THE RIGHT MAKE-UP AND HER CLOTHES AND JEWELS, YOU COULD GET BY AS EZILIE AND IT SHOULDN'T BE HARD TO FAKE THAT DANCE. IT'S OUR BIG CHANCE, DORIS!



DORIS AND FERDIE TOOK THE JEWELS FROM EZILIE'S BODY AND...



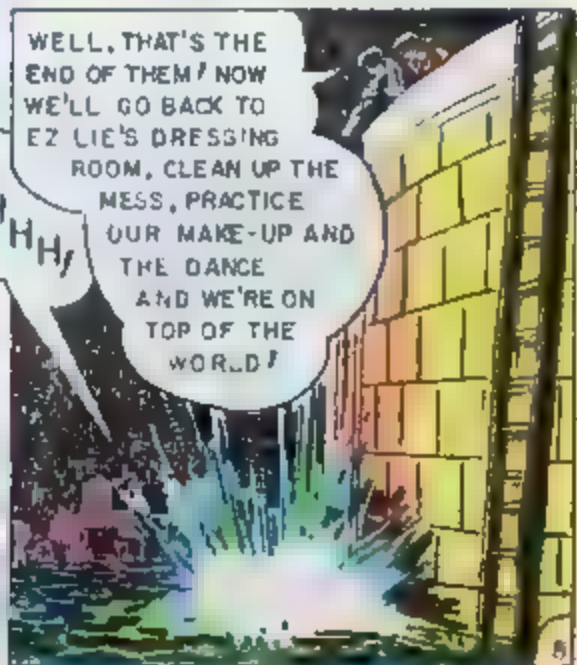
IT WAS ALMOST DAWN WHEN DORIS AND FERDIE MADE THEIR WAY DOWN TO THE RIVER FOLLOWED BY PEDRO BEARING THE BODY OF EZILIE.



WHEN THEY REACHED THE RIVER, AT FERDIE'S COMMAND, PEDRO CLIMBED TO THE TOP OF THE SEAWALL



WITH A STRANGE UNEARTHLY SHRIEK, THE ZOMBIE OBEYED



AS DORIS AND FERDIE RUSHED BACK TO THE NIGHTCLUB, STRANGE THINGS WERE HAPPENING ON THE RIVER...



UP FROM THE RIVER, A WEIRD FIGURE FLOUNDERED THROUGH THE CYPRESS SWAMP, TOWARD THE SINISTER SOUND OF THE VODOO DRUMS AND THE FLAME OF THE VODOO ALTAR.



A STRANGE FIGURE RULED THE WILD VODOO RITES THAT NIGHT...

SSSSSS... I, EZILIE, AM STILL THE GREAT MAMBA, THE POWERFUL MAMALOI! TONIGHT I SACRIFICE THE ZOMBIE PEDRO, AS I PROMISED! DEATH CANNOT PREVENT THE VOWS OF EZILIE FROM BEING FULFILLED!

THE GREAT EZILIE HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED! THE GREAT EZILIE CANNOT DIE!

I OBEY, O GREAT MAMALOI! AGAIN YOUR POWER IS UPON ME! YOU HAVE RETURNED TO CONTINUE RULING US!

SSSSSS... FOR MANY YEARS I HAVE ENSNARED VICTIMS TO FILL THE RANKS OF ZOMBIES WHO WILL DO OUR BIDDING! NOW I RETURN TO THAT WORK... AND TO VENGEANCE ON THOSE WHO DARE TAKE THAT WHICH IS MINE!



THE NEXT NIGHT AT THE NIGHTCLUB, IT LOOKED AS THOUGH DORIS AND FERDIE WERE SUCCEEDING IN THEIR PLAN...

YOUR ZOMBIE DANCE SEEMED BETTER THAN EVER TONIGHT, EZILIE! I HOPE YOU'VE GOT A PERMANENT PARTNER THIS TIME!

YES, I HAVE... AND THE ACT WILL GO ON BEING A SMASH HIT!



IN FACT, I'M PERSUADING EZILIE TO TAKE HER DANCE TO NEW YORK! WE'D BE A RIOT THERE AND COULD MAKE MORE MONEY THAN YOU PAY US!

NOW WAIT A MINUTE! THAT'S NOT FAIR! YOUR CONTRACT



BACK IN THEIR DRESSING ROOM...

AS THOUGH WE'D LET A CONTRACT KEEP US FROM NEW YORK! WHAT A STROKE OF LUCK... STEPPING INTO EZILIE'S SHOES!

WE REALLY PUT IT OVER, DIDN'T WE?



STILL THEY DID NOT SEE THE
INTRUDING, TRANSFORMED MAMLOI...

THAT VDOOOO IS POWERFUL STUFF...
BUT IT DIDN'T GET US!
SO IT WAS WORTH THE RISK JUST THE
SAME, I LIKE YOU BETTER WITHOUT
THAT ZOMBIE MAKE-UP, FERDIE.



FERDIE RUBBED THE GREASEMINT
OFF OF HIS FACE, BUT AS HE
LOOKED IN THE MIRROR...

DORIS! I—I'VE TAKEN OFF
THE MAKE-UP... BUT I—I LOOK
LIKE PEDRO! I—I FEEL
FUNNY, TOO!



CUT OUT THE CLOWNING, FERDIE!
ALTHOUGH EVERYTHING TURNED
OUT ALL RIGHT FOR US, I DON'T
FEEL LIKE JOKING ABOUT IT! SO
GET THAT MAKE-UP OFF! YOU—
YOU GIVE ME THE CREEPS!



I—I'M NOT JOKING!
I... MY BRAIN.. GROWS
NUMB...! AND YOU—
YOU—EEEEOWW!



THAT SCREAM! HORRIBLE...
UNEARTHLY! LIKE PEDRO'S
WHEN HE WENT INTO THE RIVER!
YOU—YOU LOOK LIKE HIM!
DEAD—YET EVIL
AND ALIVE—

THEN LOOK AT
YOURSELF!

DORIS TURNED TO FLEE--- BUT SUDDENLY
SAW HERSELF IN THE MIRROR BEHIND HER.

NO! NO! THIS
CAN'T BE / AND
THAT THING.
CRAWLING...
HORRIBLE—
AIIIEEE!



SSSSS! FOOLS! DID
YOU THINK YOU'D ESCAPED?
THE BLOOD OF EZILIE THAT
SCATTERED ON YOU IS POTENT
AS ANY POTION! YOU ARE IN
MY POWER FOREVER. MY
ZOMBIES!

SSSSS! YOU WANTED
TO DANCE, YOU WANTED
FAME! NOW YOU HAVE
THEM. BECAUSE I WILL
IT! BUT YOU KNOW NOTHING
FEEL NOTHING! YOU
BELONG TO MY LEGION
OF THE LIVING DEAD!



WEIRD!
MAKES YOU
THINK
THERE
REALLY
COULD
BE ZOMBIES
AROUND!

HAVE YOU BEEN TO
NEW ORLEANS
RECENTLY?
PERHAPS YOU, TOO,
ADMIRE THE WEIRD
"ZOMBIE DANCE"
THAT'S THE MOST
FAMOUS NIGHTCLUB
ACT IN THE COUNTRY.
BUT NO ONE EVER
SEES THE STAR AND
HER PARTNER BE-
FORE OR AFTER
THEIR PERFORMANCE
EVERYONE FIGURES
IT IS A PUBLICITY
STUNT AND DORIS
AND FERDIE CAN'T
TELL ANYONE THE
TRUTH WHO WOULD
BELIEVE IT ANY-
HOW?

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

#34

ONE OF THE MOST MACABRE TALES TO COME FROM THE MOORS OF SCOTLAND, TOOK PLACE FIFTY-SIX YEARS AGO. A POLICE INSPECTOR FROM LONDON ARRIVED AT A SMALL TOWN BORDERING ON THE VAST, MYSTERIOUS MOORS TO INVESTIGATE THE REPORT OF A STRANGE DEATH IN THE VILLAGE. THE TOWNSPEOPLE CLAIMED A WEREWOLF HAD KILLED A VILLAGER.

HMM... SCRATCHES AND CLAW MARKS... FANG HOLES IN HIS THROAT! IT MUST HAVE BEEN A HUGE DOG OR WOLF!

NOT A WOLF, INSPECTOR... A WEREWOLF! THEY ROAM THE MOORS AT MIDNIGHT LOOKING FOR FOOD... HUMAN BLOOD! SEE HOW DRAINED HIS BODY IS!

WEREWOLVES... NONSENSE! I MUST TAKE THIS BODY TO GLASGOW FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION. WILL SOMEONE DRIVE ME ACROSS THE MOOR TONIGHT SO I CAN CATCH THE LAST TRAIN BACK?

ARE YOU DAFT, MAN? WEREWOLVES COME TO LIFE AT MIDNIGHT! TO CROSS THE MOORS THEN IS SURE DEATH!

I WILL, INSPECTOR, FOR A FAT PRICE!

THAT NIGHT, THE INSPECTOR AND THE TEAMSTER STARTED ACROSS THE MOORS WITH THE BODY OF A MAN BELIEVED SLAIN BY WEREWOLVES! MIDWAY ACROSS...

IT'S TWELVE O'CLOCK -- TIME FOR THE BEASTS TO SHOW!

YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE SILLY SUPERSTITION, DO YOU, MAC LEOD?

AS IF IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, MAC LEOD'S FEATURES BEGAN TO CHANGE.

AAAAAIIII! MAC LEOD... Y-YOU-- THE WEREWOLF!

RRRAAGGH

THE INSPECTOR WAS HURLED FROM THE WAGON BY THE FURIOUS IMPACT OF THE WEREWOLF'S ATTACK. THE TERROR-STRICKEN HORSES RAGED FORWARD TO ESCAPE THE SCENE OF THE HORRIBLE EVENT.

HELP! HELP! AARRGH!

RRRGGHHH

THE HORSES DID NOT STOP UNTIL THEY REACHED A NEAR-BY VILLAGE. A POSSE WAS ORGANIZED TO TRACE THE ROUTE OF THE HORSES' FLIGHT. WHEN THEY REACHED THE SCENE, THEY RECOILED IN HORROR! BEFORE THEM LAY THE DEAD BODY OF THE INSPECTOR. HIS FACE AND THROAT CLAWED BY THE FANGS OF A WEREWOLF... HIS BODY COMPLETELY DRAINED OF BLOOD! THE DEAD MAN HE WAS TAKING TO GLASGOW WAS FOUND BESIDE HIM! ONLY THE FOOTPRINTS OF A WEREWOLF REMAINED TO ATTEST TO THE TERRIBLE EVENT. **THE END**

HOSTAGE of the UNEARTHLY

THIS IS THE HALF-WORLD... THE PLACE WHERE MONSTERS AND DEMONS LURK, WAITING FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO INVADE THE WORLD OF HUMANS. FOR CENTURIES, THE DEMONS HAVE SURROUNDED THE EDGES OF OUR WORLD, HOPING A ROAD WOULD BE OPENED TO THEM... A ROAD THAT WOULD PERMIT THEM TO RETURN TO THE PLANE FROM WHICH THEY HAD BEEN BANISHED. HERE IS A STORY OF ONE ATTEMPT AT INVASION!

THOUSANDS OF YEARS HAVE PASSED... AND WE ARE STILL NO NEARER OUR GOAL THAN BEFORE! IS THERE NEVER TO BE A RETURN TO THE EARTH-PLANE?

WE HAVE BEEN PATIENT THIS LONG WE CAN STILL WAIT

WAITING MAY NO LONGER BE NECESSARY! I THINK A WAY MIGHT BE OPENED!

I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM OBSERVING A HUMAN. A MAN CALLED RICHARD BLANKENSHIP HE HAS BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH RADIATION THROUGH HIS EXPERIMENTS, A PATHWAY INTO THE EARTH-PLANE MAY BE OPENED!

THEN I HEREBY ASSIGN YOU... AND ANY OTHER AMONG US YOU MAY CHOOSE... TO STAY WITH THIS HUMAN / WATCH HIM... AND BE PREPARED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY!

WE WILL LEAVE AT ONCE!

DOWN THEY RUSHED... DOWN AS CLOSE TO THE EARTH-PLANE AS THEY COULD REACH

THERE IT IS! THAT'S THE ISLAND ON WHICH BLANKENSHIP IS CONDUCTING HIS EXPERIMENTS...

GOOD! WE WILL WATCH HIS EVERY MOVE!



A FEW MOMENTS LATER

G-R-R-R! A DOG! I HATE THEM! THEY ARE THE ONLY CREATURES ON THE EARTH-PLANE WHO CAN ALWAYS SENSE OUR PRESENCE!



AND, UNNOTICED BY ANY BUT THE DOG, THE DEMONS STOOD BY AND WATCHED

DID YOU HEAR SPOT? HE SEEMS TO HAVE SENSED SOME EVIL! I—I FEEL IT, TOO!

YOU'VE BEEN JUMPY EVER SINCE I STARTED THESE EXPERIMENTS, MARY. YOU'VE GOT TO CALM YOUR NERVES.



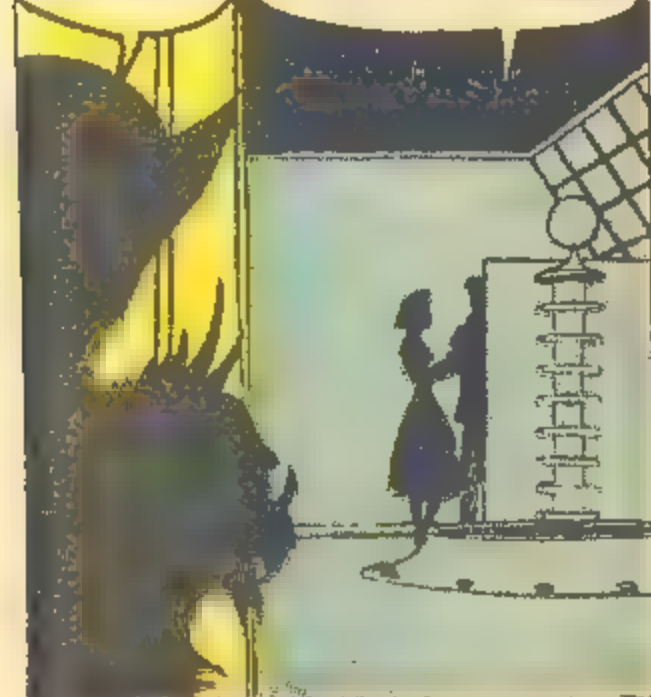
WON'T YOU LISTEN TO ME, DICK? WON'T YOU GIVE UP YOUR EXPERIMENT? I TELL YOU... THERE'S SOMETHING EVIL HERE!

NO... I WON'T! I'M READY TO TURN ON MY RADIATION FORCE-FIELD...AND NO SILLY NONSENSE IS GOING TO STOP ME!



I'M GLAD SHE DIDN'T TALK HIM OUT OF IT!

COME, GET BEHIND THIS LEAD SHIELD WITH ME! I'M READY TO TURN ON THE JUICE!

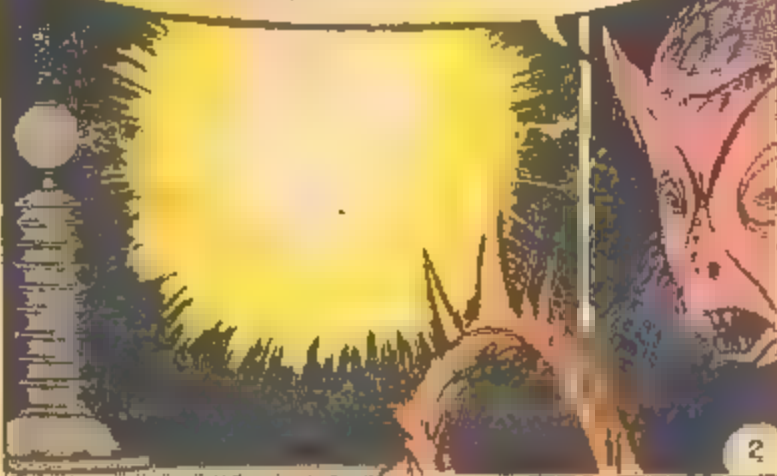


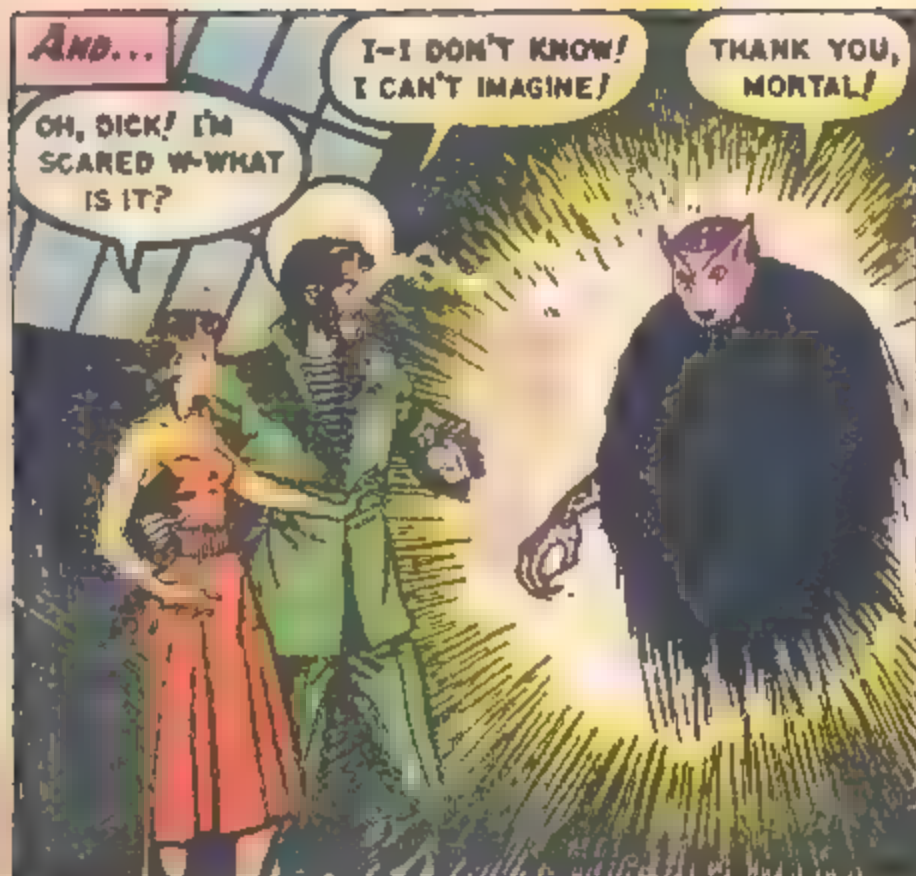
THERE...



AS THE SWITCH WAS DEPRESSED, A LOW HUM FILLED THE AIR...GROWING WITH INTENSITY UNTIL A BRIGHT SPOT BEGAN TO VIBRATE IN MID-AIR, VIBRATING AT HIGHER AND HIGHER FREQUENCY. THEN

LOOK! IT'S THERE...THE PERFECT DOORWAY INTO THE EARTH-PLANE! WE CAN GO THROUGH AT LAST...AFTER ALL THESE THOUSANDS OF YEARS!





AND...

OH, DICK! I'M
SCARED W-WHAT
IS IT?

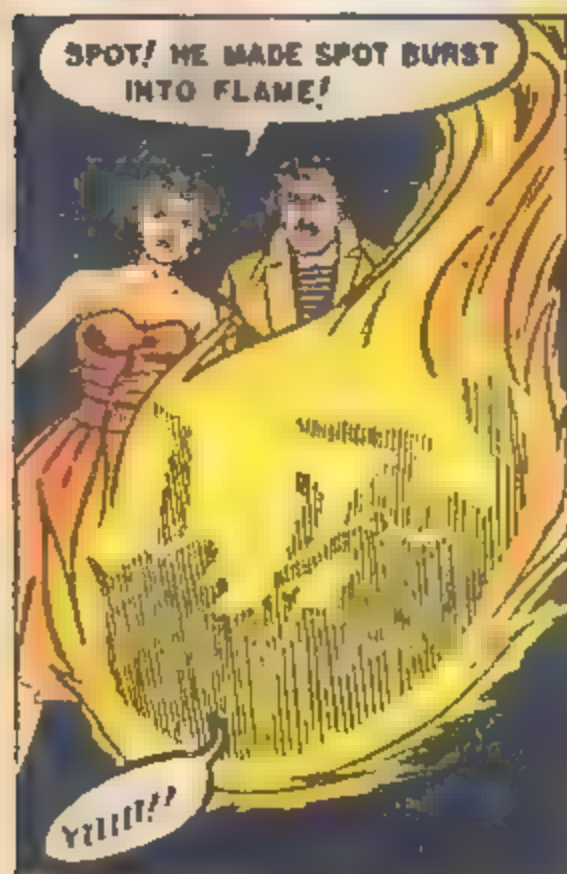
I-I DON'T KNOW!
I CAN'T IMAGINE!

THANK YOU,
MORTAL!



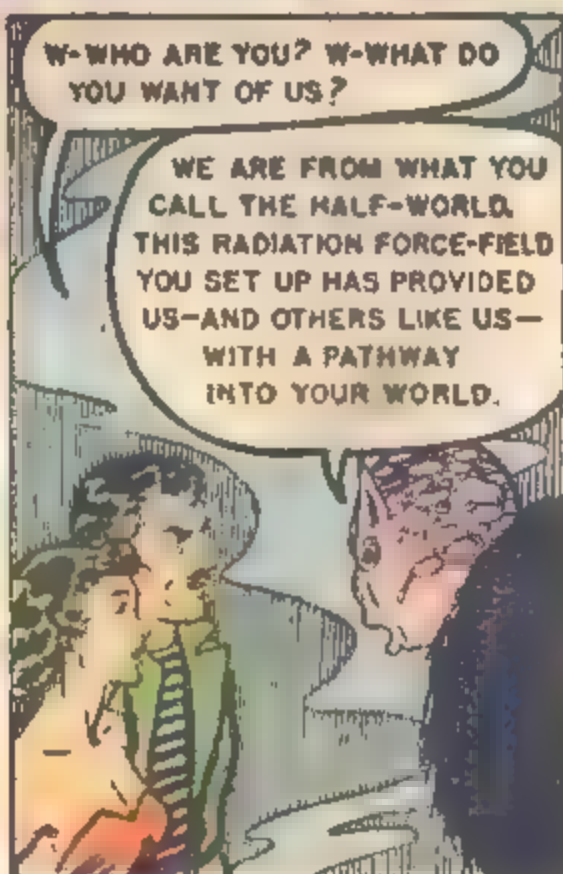
G-R-R-R-R!

YOUR DOG SHOULD NOT
DO THIS! HE SHOULD
STAY AWAY FROM US!



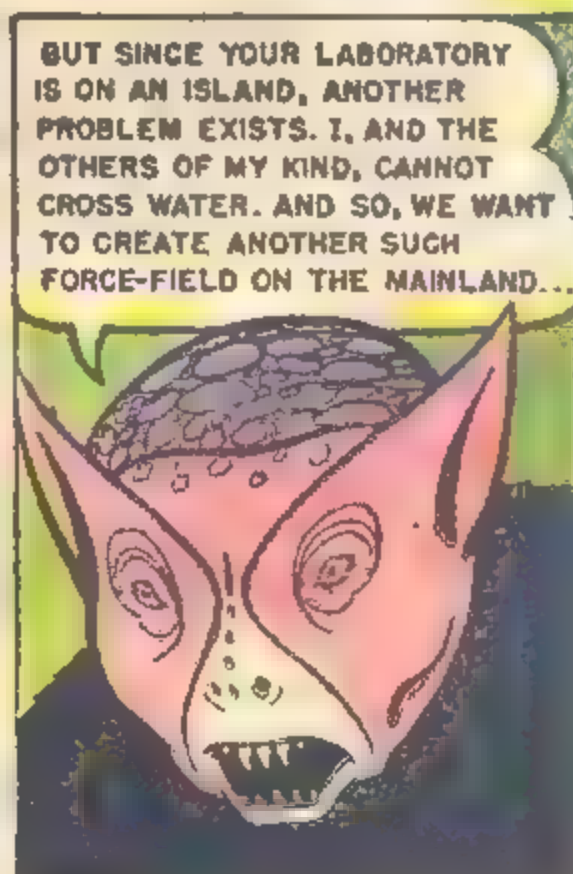
SPOT! HE MADE SPOT BURST
INTO FLAME!

YIIII!!

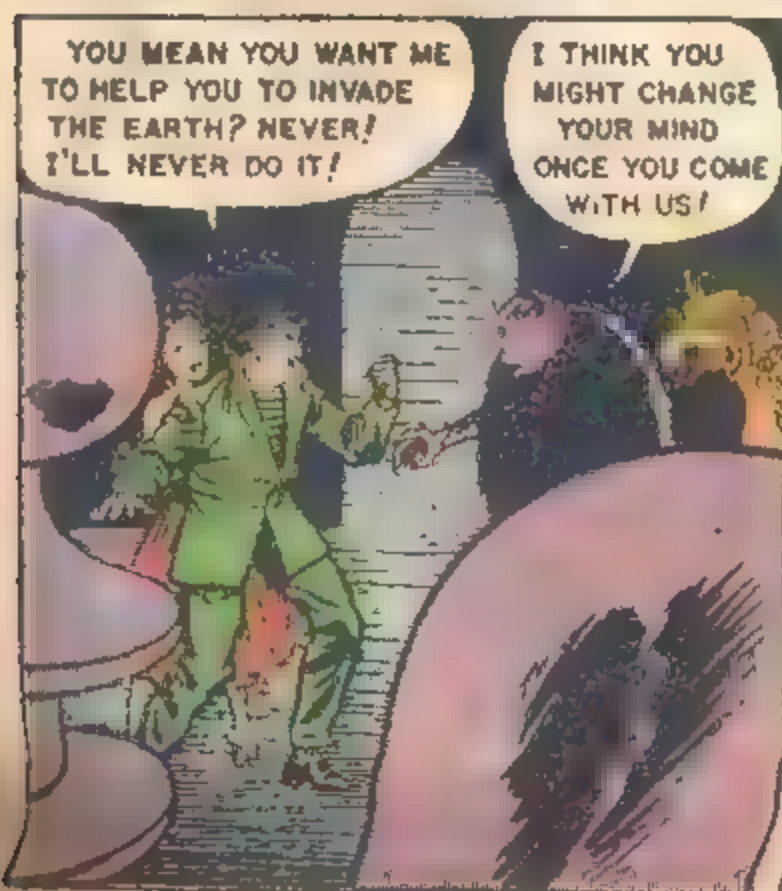


W-WHO ARE YOU? W-WHAT DO
YOU WANT OF US?

WE ARE FROM WHAT YOU
CALL THE HALF-WORLD.
THIS RADIATION FORCE-FIELD
YOU SET UP HAS PROVIDED
US-AND OTHERS LIKE US-
WITH A PATHWAY
INTO YOUR WORLD.



BUT SINCE YOUR LABORATORY
IS ON AN ISLAND, ANOTHER
PROBLEM EXISTS. I, AND THE
OTHERS OF MY KIND, CANNOT
CROSS WATER. AND SO, WE WANT
TO CREATE ANOTHER SUCH
FORCE-FIELD ON THE MAINLAND...



YOU MEAN YOU WANT ME
TO HELP YOU TO INVADE
THE EARTH? NEVER!
I'LL NEVER DO IT!

I THINK YOU
MIGHT CHANGE
YOUR MIND
ONCE YOU COME
WITH US!



FOR A MOMENT DICK DIDN'T UNDERSTAND... BUT THEN
HANDS WITH THE STRENGTH OF STEEL GRIPPED
HIM AND HIS WIFE. . .

STOP THEM,
DICK! HELP ME!

I-I'M TRYING TO/
BUT I CAN'T!

YOU HELPED US
INTO YOUR
WORLD...AND NOW
WE TAKE YOU
TO OURS!

ONCE THROUGH THE FORCE-FIELD THERE WERE LONG MOMENTS OF INTENSE PAIN, A BURNING AS THOUGH FROM THE UTTERMOST DEPTHS OF HELL, AND A CONSTANT VIBRATION THAT TORE THROUGH THEIR VERY VITALS

OH HHHHHH!

UNTIL...

IT'S HORRIBLE... HORRIBLE! WHAT HAPPENED TO US?

W-WHERE ARE WE?

YOU'RE IN MY WORLD AND NOW I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU IF YOU DON'T AGREE TO DO AS I ASK!

THERE IS OUR PIT... MOLTEN ROCK... AND THE CREATURES WAITING TO DEVOUR YOU ALMOST BEFORE YOU REACH ITS SURFACE

NO! NO!



OR OUR BEAUTIFUL BUTTERFLYS WAITING TO TAKE YOU TO THEIR COCOONS! WE HAVE OTHER SIGHTS YOU MIGHT --

DON'T LET THEM COME NEARER!

I WILL... UNLESS YOU AGREE! AND IF YOU DO AGREE, I'LL KEEP YOUR WIFE HERE AS HOSTAGE UNTIL THE FORCE-FIELD IS COMPLETED!

DICK! I'M FRIGHTENED!

OH... THAT ANY MAN SHOULD HAVE TO MAKE SUCH A DREADFUL DECISION! BUT -- ALL RIGHT, I'LL DO IT... FOR MARY'S SAKE!

GOOD! GOOD! NOW, I'LL SEND YOU BACK THROUGH THE PATHWAY TO YOUR LABORATORY AGAIN!

THERE WAS THE SAME TORTUROUS DIZZINESS... THE SAME TWISTING! AND THEN...

I—I'M BACK! I'LL HAVE TO DO AS THEY ASK, BUT I'D BETTER TALK TO JIM WILSON FIRST IF ANYONE CAN HELP ME, HE CAN!



AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, DICK HURRIED TO THE HOME OF JIM WILSON, HIS BEST FRIEND, AND TOLD HIM THE FANTASTIC STORY.

BUT IT'S UNBELIEVABLE! IT'S HARD TO SWALLOW SOMETHING LIKE THAT!

YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME! THEY HAVE MARY A PRISONER, AND I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HER IF I DON'T HELP THEM!



THROUGH ALL, THE DEMONS WERE NOT FAR AWAY.

ALL RIGHT, DICK! I'LL TAKE YOUR WORD FOR IT... AND I'LL HELP YOU. I KNOW THE PERFECT PLACE FOR YOU TO SET UP YOUR FORCE-FIELD.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU.



AND SOON...

THERE IT IS, DICK. IT'S AN OLD CASTLE SOME RICH MAN HAD IMPORTED FROM EUROPE, AND THEN LET IT GO TO RUIN. I BOUGHT IT A SHORT WHILE AGO.

BUT WHY HERE? WHY DO YOU THINK I SHOULD SET UP A FORCE-FIELD IN THIS PLACE?



I HAVE A PLAN. YOU SEE, I—

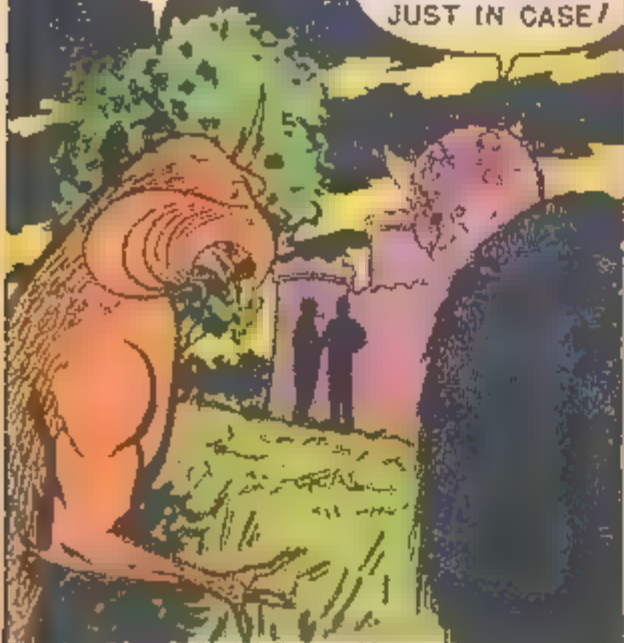
NO! DON'T SAY ANYTHING TO ME! ALTHOUGH WE CAN'T SEE THEM, IT'S POSSIBLE THE DEMONS MIGHT BE ALL AROUND US, LISTENING!



UNSEEN BY THE TWO MEN...

DO YOU THINK THIS FRIEND OF HIS IS PLANNING SOME TRICKERY?

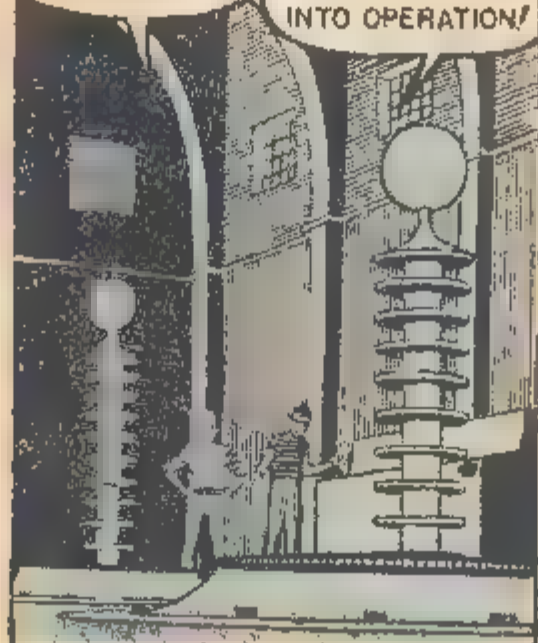
NO HE WOULDN'T DARE! BUT WE WILL KEEP WATCHING HIM CAREFULLY... JUST IN CASE!



WEEKS OF PATIENT WORK WENT BY UNTIL AT LAST...

SHE'S ALL SET NOW, I GUESS, DICK! THIS IS THE MOMENT!

YES. I'M GOING TO PULL THE SWITCH TO START THE FIELD INTO OPERATION!



THERE WAS A HUM... THE CENTRAL SPOT OF GLOWING LIGHT... AND...

I CONGRATULATE YOU, MORTAL. YOU HAVE DONE AS YOU PROMISED!

GOOD HEAVENS, DICK! I REALLY DIDN'T THINK IT POSSIBLE, BUT, YOU WERE RIGHT! THEY ARE COMING THROUGH!



IT WAS A SIGHT TO STARTLE THE BRAVEST MAN!
THROUGH THE FORCE-FIELD THEY POURED, THEIR STENCH
FILLING THE CASTLE WITH THE ODOR OF THINGS
LONG-DEAD . . .

SEE, MORTAL? WE WILL SOON ALL BE HERE... AND
THEN THE WORLD WILL BE OURS ONCE AGAIN!

WHAT ABOUT MY WIFE? YOU—
YOU PROMISED TO BRING HER
BACK SAFELY...

YOU KEPT YOUR PROMISE, AND I SHALL
KEEP OURS. I WILL BRING YOUR WIFE TO
YOU AT ONCE!

A FEW SECONDS
LATER . . .

MARY! MARY! YOU'RE
SAFE! YOU'RE BACK!

OH, DICK! THANK
HEAVENS! I THOUGHT
I'D NEVER SEE YOU
AGAIN!

I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE
ALL RIGHT! IT'S
WONDERFUL TO SEE
YOU!

SAVE THE
GREETINGS FOR
LATER. NOW THAT
SHE'S BACK, I
CAN PRESS THIS
BUTTON I
PREPARED!

AND...

AS THE SOUND OF THE EXPLOSION RENT
THE AIR, THE MONSTERS FROM THE HALF-
WORLD TURNED IN SUDDEN SURPRISE
TO THE THREE MORTALS...

WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE? WHAT KIND
OF TRICKERY IS
THIS? I HEAR
THE SOUND OF
RUNNING WATER!

YOU FORGOT THERE
WAS A MOAT AROUND
THIS OLD CASTLE!
I JUST CREATED AN
EXPLOSION THAT
CAUSED THE MOAT
TO BE FILLED WITH
WATER!

WE ARE ON A PLACE SURROUNDED
BY WATER AGAIN! IT IS THE SAME
AS THE ISLAND! WE HAVE BEEN
TRICKED! AFTER THEM! AFTER THEM!

QUICK! DOWN HERE! THE
CELLAR SHOULD BE
FLOODED, TOO!

THE OLD STONE STEPS ECHOED WITH THE SOUND OF RACING FEET AS THE THREE HUMANS MADE A FRANTIC EFFORT TO ESCAPE THE HORRIBLE TORTURES WAITING FOR THEM.

HURRY!
WE'LL
HAVE TO
DIVE IN!

THEY MUST
NOT ESCAPE!
GET THEM!



W-WHAT'LL WE
DO NOW? THEY'LL
COME AFTER US!

THEY CAN'T!
THEY CAN'T
GO THROUGH
WATER!

AND IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S A
WAY OUT... / OVER THERE!
THAT'S HOW THE WATER MUST
HAVE GOT INTO THE CELLAR!

AND SOON THEY
WERE OUTSIDE
THE CASTLE AND
ACROSS THE
MOAT.

OH! I NEVER THOUGHT I'D
LIVE THROUGH IT!

WE'RE NOT THROUGH
YET! WE'RE NOT
COMPLETELY SAFE!

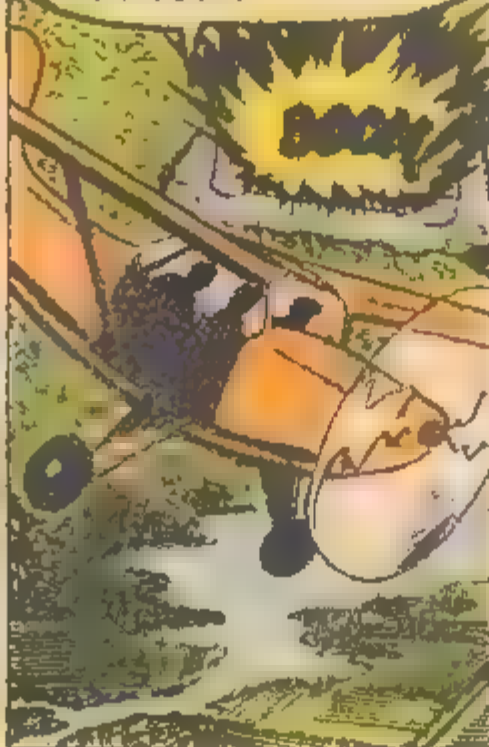


YES...THE DEMONS MAY BE IM-
PRISONED IN THE CASTLE, BUT
WE'VE GOT TO DRIVE THEM BACK
INTO THEIR HALF-WORLD!

WE CAN DO IT BY DESTROYING
THE RADIATION MACHINES...
FORCING THEM TO GO BACK!
I CAN HIRE A PLANE.

AND...

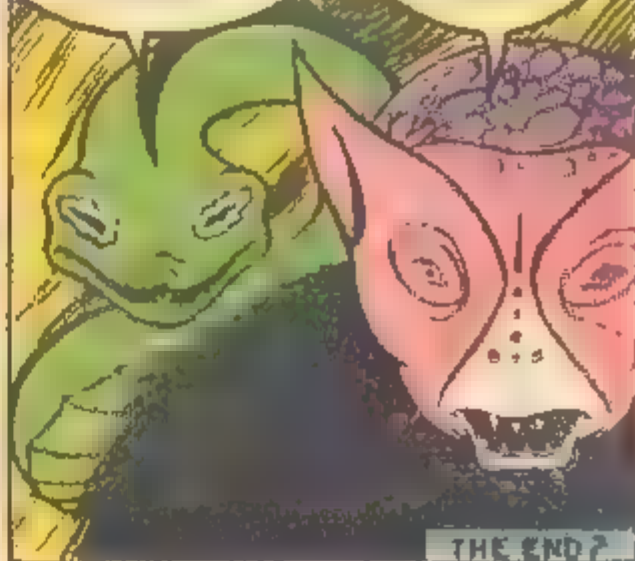
THERE! THAT'LL
TAKE CARE OF THAT
MACHINE. WE'LL HEAD OVER
TO THE ISLAND NEXT, AND
TAKE CARE OF THE OTHER
ONE! THEN THE DEMONS WILL
BE OUT OF THE EARTH-PLANE
FOR GOOD!



YES...THE DEMONS WERE FORCED
BACK TO THEIR HALF-WORLD! BUT
WAS IT FOR GOOD?

WE WERE BEATEN
THIS TIME, BUT
ANOTHER CHANCE
WILL COME! SOME-
DAY WE'LL FIND
ANOTHER WAY TO
THE EARTH-PLANE!
SOMEDAY WE'LL
RETURN!

I'M SURE WE
WILL. AFTER
ALL, WE'VE
WAITED FOR
THOUSANDS OF
YEARS WE
CAN WAIT
THAT MUCH
LONGER!



THE END?

CRIMSON FURY

Someone once said, facetiously no doubt, that if Cleopatra's nose had been a little longer, the map of the world might have been changed. I guess there's a kernel of truth in that. We all know how a little thing, even the most insignificant, can alter a person's life—or cause his death. A man is tired, he lights a cigarette in bed—and the next day we read that he burned to death. You're driving along, carefree, and for a moment you daydream and take your eye off the road. . . . A crash! Or you're taking a shower and the soap falls out of your hands—you can slip and break your skull.

In our town people are still talking about the little incident in Nate's Barber Shop that had such a disastrous effect on three persons' lives.

Nate's is a small store that stands midway in the block that houses most of our town's stores. It is, as I say, a small place but not really so by our standards. It has three chairs and though Nate handles all the business himself during the week, come Saturday the shop begins to fill up and Nate has to put on two extra barbers.

Nate is getting on in years and I guess you'd say he's a man who takes his time. But twice a month, the lead drops out of his shoes and he moves around like a young heller. That's when Harris Brinton comes into the shop. Twice a month, in the busy part of a Saturday afternoon, Harris Brinton appears at the door and no matter who is in Nate's chair, Nate gets rid of him quicker than you can brush your trousers.

I don't know what Harris Brinton did to rate this service. Nobody in our town knows anything about Harris Brinton—or at least they didn't know . . . until that fateful affair. The point is, he eases into the chair, without a word or nod of greeting, Nate works on him—just the clippers and scissors, no razor—Brinton hands over a bill and he departs. Not a single word between them. The first time he was there, I understand, he gave Nate instructions on how he wanted his hair done, and since then never a word passed between them.

But one day Nate fell sick and took to his bed and when Harris Brinton entered, Nate's son Joe stood behind the first chair. Joe had a job as clerk in the county courthouse and he had two children of his own, but he had learned barbering by his father's side and he felt it his duty to take the old man's place, it being his day off.

Harris Brinton looked at him, a small smile forming around his lips, and he seated himself

in the chair.

"Only the clippers and scissors," he said. "No razor."

"Gotcha," said Joe.

And as Joe began to snip with the scissors, Harris Brinton closed his saucer-round eyes and began to drowse, the clicking rhythm of the scissors lulling out all other sounds. He didn't hear the banter of the waiting men, or the clink of the register as Joe rang up the money from one of the Saturday barbers, or the door open to let someone in or out.

But suddenly, though it was the faintest of nicks, Harris Brinton's hand clapped to his neck and he jumped out of the chair, his face purpling.

"Fool!" he cried. "Idiot! I told you, no razor!"

"Sorry," said Joe. "Slipped my mind."

Harris Brinton glared. Some say the whites of his eyes grew red.

"My coat," he demanded.

"Only trims the sideboards and around the ears neater," said Joe. "No real harm done."

But Harris Brinton flung down a bill and without waiting for his change, stomped out. He hurried up the hill, the old memory coming back to his mind. The old memory . . . and the old horror. He'd been only five or six then, and his mother had taken him in for a haircut. It was something of an occasion—a neighbor girl's birthday party—and his mother told the barber to make it extra neat. So after finishing with the clippers and the scissors, the barber dabbed some suds around his ears, and when next he turned around, there was a big, shiny razor glistening in his hand. It was as big as a cutlass to the young boy, and his eyes grew wide and he screamed. But his mother held him—it had to be neat—and fearfully he thought his throat was to be slashed. He squirmed, and there was a little blood—and he fainted. . . . Harris Brinton's brow now was damp, remembering.

But back in Nate's Barber Shop the men were joshing Joe a bit, telling him he ought to stick to clerking in the courthouse, and the incident was soon forgotten.

For two weeks it was forgotten.

Old Nate was still sick abed and on the second Saturday after, Joe couldn't stop to play with his children. He had to hurry to open the barber shop. But it was never to be opened again. For outside, hard by the door, Joe was found, his face digging into the sidewalk, a crimson gash deep in his neck. A gash that could have been

made only by a knife — or a razor. And Joe's keys were still in his pocket.

The townspeople quickly gathered. The sheriff was summoned. All stood aghast. Joe was much loved and the fever of revenge in Craigville soon reached the boiling point.

"Couldn't be one of us," said a tall man with a fiery eye and a black beard. "Nobody here in Craigville would do such an act of the devil . . . unless — unless —"

"Out with it, Jethro," said Sheriff Cunningham. "What's on your mind?"

"The man on the hill," Jethro replied. "Harris Brinton. He's really a stranger. Been here a year but nobody knows him —"

"But everybody knows you want *his* house," a voice called out.

Jethro flushed. "Nobody knows him," he repeated. "Besides, I heard tell as how he had words with Joe — hot words. About a razor."

The crowd took up the cry and Sheriff Cunningham knew he had to question Harris Brinton. The men and boys of Craigville followed him up the hill, muttering.

Harris Brinton greeted them calmly and heard out the sheriff without speaking. His eyes studied the crowd and finally he said, his words jumping out in a sharp staccato: "Nonsense! I was here in my house all the time! I never left the place!"

But some of the men had meanwhile been going through the house. A sharp call from one of them brought the crowd surging to the library. The tall man, Jethro, stood on the threshold, his eyes gleaming.

"You have no right —" Harris Brinton began.

"Old Jethro," one of the citizens cackled, "is just lookin' through property he's aimin' to get."

But Jethro stood his ground. "Look!" he said. "In that glass case, Razors! Dozens of 'em! And one of 'em is Nate's. You can tell by the nick on the handle."

The men elbowed forward.

"That's Nate's all right," one said.

"He uses it on me all the time," another asserted.

"I know it like I know my own jackknife," said a third.

"And look at all these books," Jethro's voice proclaimed. "Books of the devil himself. Jest read them titles. *Medieval Magic. Sorcery of the Middle Ages. Alchemy Regained.*"

A low murmur built up, grew to a growl in the crowd. The men's hands stirred restlessly.

"Men —" Jethro's voice boomed above the muttering. "men, you can see for yourself who did it! Are we goin' to bed each night dreading a man with books like these — and a case full of razors? I say —"

"I say," Sheriff Cunningham interrupted, "break it up, men! I'll take Mr. Brinton in and have him questioned legal-like by the County Attorney and

everything will go according to law. Now all you men disperse!"

He tried to take Harris Brinton from the room, but the crowd stood in a solid wedge, their souls inflamed by Jethro who kept up a running exhortation. "No!" cried Jethro. "Don't let the sheriff take him! No — men!" And the words kept splattering out of him like angry bullets.

But the sheriff kept pushing, and he was a man of great strength, and finally Jethro leaped to the case, smashed it with a paperweight and drew forth the razor. He bullied through the crowd, still shouting, and waved the razor under Brinton's nose.

"Confess!" he cried. "Confess — so all may know you did it, you son of the devil!"

"Out of my way, you fool Jethro," said the sheriff, "or I'll have to take you in too — for obstructing justice."

It never was clear what happened next. At the Coroner's Inquest, the next week, Sheriff Cunningham swore it was done with malice aforethought; but some of the men claimed that as the sheriff was trying to push Harris Brinton through the crowd, and while Jethro was waving the razor, somebody in the surging crowd stumbled against Jethro's hand, the razor made a swooping arc, and suddenly a deep red gushing gash appeared in Harris Brinton's neck. One person even insisted, later, that Brinton actually bent his head to meet the razor, but nobody believed that.

There was no question, however, that Brinton died — of the same kind of gash that killed Joe, old Nate's son. He died muttering strange curses and imprecations and that he'd get vengeance even tho he was dying.

At the Coroner's Inquest, death was found to be "accidental." Nobody knew what the juror actually thought but some of them had been in the "crowd" and they felt too guilty to point an accusing finger at Jethro.

As he came out of the storming courtroom, old Farley Jethro stroked his beard and laughed. As he hitched up his pants and took a walk up the hill to see the big house that had been Harris Brinton's. Within twenty-four hours he had his lawyer make out papers for the sale, and since there were no heirs the county had title to it, Farley Jethro got the house cheap. Real cheap.

And every day Jethro walked up to see the house. And at the end of two weeks, when the papers were finally signed and the title was in his hands, Jethro walked in to stay.

He never walked out.

He was found the next morning on the floor of the library, his throat gashed from ear to ear like poor Joe and Harris Brinton.

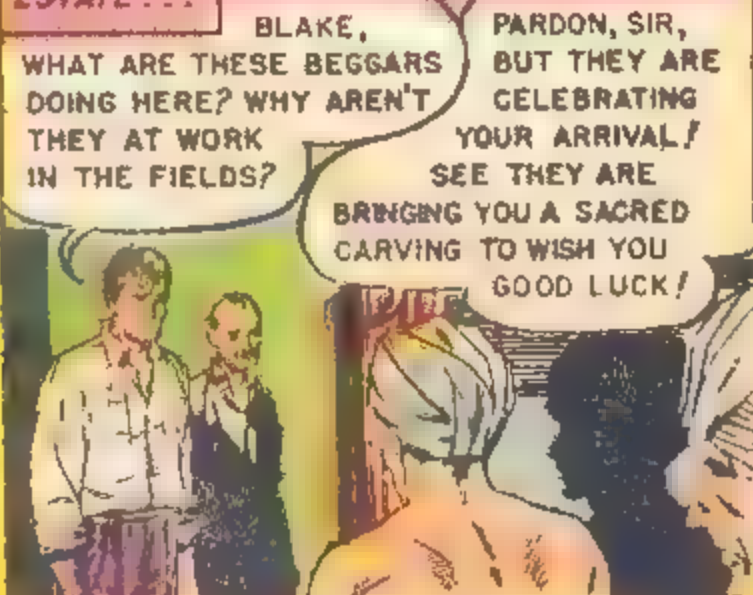
But the razor was still in the case — with tiny flecks of blood on it. And nearby, Harris Brinton's books on sorcery and black magic.

WHEN WOODOO DRUMS RUMBLE



WHEN STEFAN HOOTNER INHERITED HIS UNCLE'S WEST INDIAN ESTATE, HIS ARROGANCE AND CONTEMPT FOR THE NATIVES WAS UNBRIDLED. HE SCORNEED THEIR CEREMONIES, INSULTED THEIR GODS, SNEERED AT THEIR CENTURIES' OLD BELIEFS AND BRUTALLY PUNISHED THE SLIGHTED INFRACTIONS. YET THERE WAS TO BE A RECKONING. THE FOREST DRUMS BOOMED, FORESHADOWING DISASTER. BUT STEFAN'S EARS WERE CLOSED, AND HIS EYES DID NOT SEE THE CREEPING SHADOWS OF DOOM WHICH FORECAST . . . THE VOODOO ORDEAL!

STEFAN HOOTNER NEVER DREAMED SUCH A SCENE COULD EVER TAKE PLACE. WHEN HE FIRST ARRIVED AT HIS DECEASED UNCLE'S ESTATE . . .



I OUGHT TO BREAK IT OVER THEIR LAZY SKULLS..! ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, I'LL KEEP IT, BUT GET THEM AWAY FROM THE HOUSE!



LATER, INSIDE THE MANOR...

NASTY-LOOKING THING, THIS CARVING / SHOWS WHAT A LOT OF SUPERSTITIOUS MUMBO JUMBO GOES ON IN THESE NATIVES' MINDS /

I'VE LIVED ON THIS ISLAND FOR TWENTY YEARS, MR HOOTNER. I'VE COME TO APPRECIATE A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THESE NATIVES / A PIECE OF CARVING LIKE THAT IS A WORK OF ART AND HAS MEANING, ONCE YOU UNDERSTAND /

BAH, THIS IS WHAT I THINK OF IT AND ALL THIS NATIVE RUBBISH YOU'VE BEEN SPOUTING ABOUT / THEY'RE JUST PRIMITIVE..

MR HOOTNER, NO! DON'T! UNCIVILIZED /

SUDDENLY, WITH FIERY INCANDESCENCE...

GREAT SCOTT! WHAT IS THAT?

STEFAN HOOTNER, YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO CAST ASIDE YOUR GOOD FORTUNE / INSTEAD OF THAT, YOU SHALL HAVE —

THIS / AS A WARNING /

HOOTNER, YOU'VE RAISED A ZOMBIE FIRE DEVIL / YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TOSSED THE CARVING INTO THE FLAMES /

WE'VE GOT TO STOP THAT THING BEFORE THE WHOLE HOUSE BURNS DOWN / DO SOMETHING, BLAKE / HURRY!

I'M SOUNDING THE ALARM / WE'LL ORGANIZE A BUCKET BRIGADE /

MOMENTS LATER...

HURRY, MOVE FASTER, YOU LAZY RASCALS / YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT!

LOOK, THE FIRE DEMON IS LEAVING! THE HOUSE WILL BE SAVED AFTER ALL / YOU'RE LUCKY THIS WAS ONLY A WARNING!

AT LAST WHEN THE FIRE WAS EXTINGUISHED

THAT FIRE WAS CAUSED BY NATIVE MAGIC? CLAPTRAP / IT WAS AN ARSON PLOT TO TEST ME / I'LL SHOW THEM WHO'S MASTER HERE WHEN I START LAYING DOWN THE LAW!

IF YOU INTEND TO USE THAT WHIP, I'M LEAVING, HOOTNER / YOU CAN'T BEAT VOODOO WITH FORCE / I DON'T WANT TO BE AROUND WHEN YOU TRY IT!

YOUR UNCLE WAS A GENTLEMAN AND THE NATIVES LOOKED UP TO HIM/ BUT YOU'RE A TYRANT/ AND I HATE TO THINK OF WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU!

GET OUT! YOU'RE A SNIVELING COWARD/ I'LL MANAGE MY OWN ESTATE AND MAKE IT A MODEL FOR THE ISLANDS/ GET OUT BEFORE I HORSEWHIP YOU!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WHILE STEFAN WAS INSPECTING THE ESTATE STOREHOUSES

THAT'S FUNNY! WE GAVE NO ORDERS TO GIVE OUT SUPPLIES THEY'RE STEALING MY GOODS!



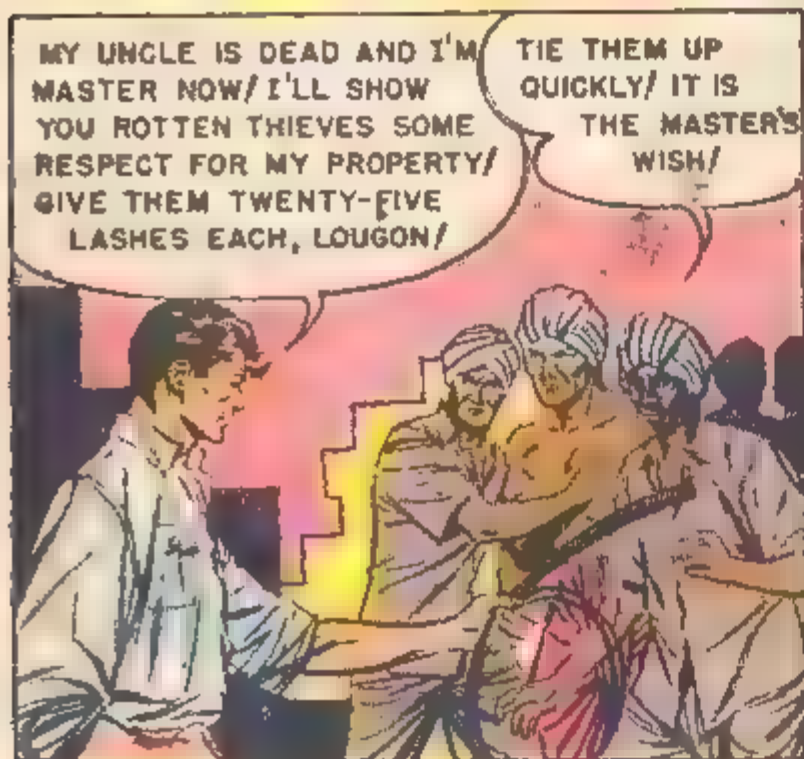
DROP THOSE GOODS, YOU THIEVES, AND STOP IN YOUR TRACKS OR I'LL SHOOT YOU DOWN! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?

WE ARE NOT STEALING, MR. HOOTNER WE NEED A FEW SUPPLIES FOR A BIG FEAST TONIGHT. YOUR UNCLE--HE KNEW ABOUT THIS ALL THE TIME HE NEVER SAY NOTHING!



MY UNCLE IS DEAD AND I'M MASTER NOW/ I'LL SHOW YOU ROTTEN THIEVES SOME RESPECT FOR MY PROPERTY/ GIVE THEM TWENTY-FIVE LASHES EACH, LOUGON!

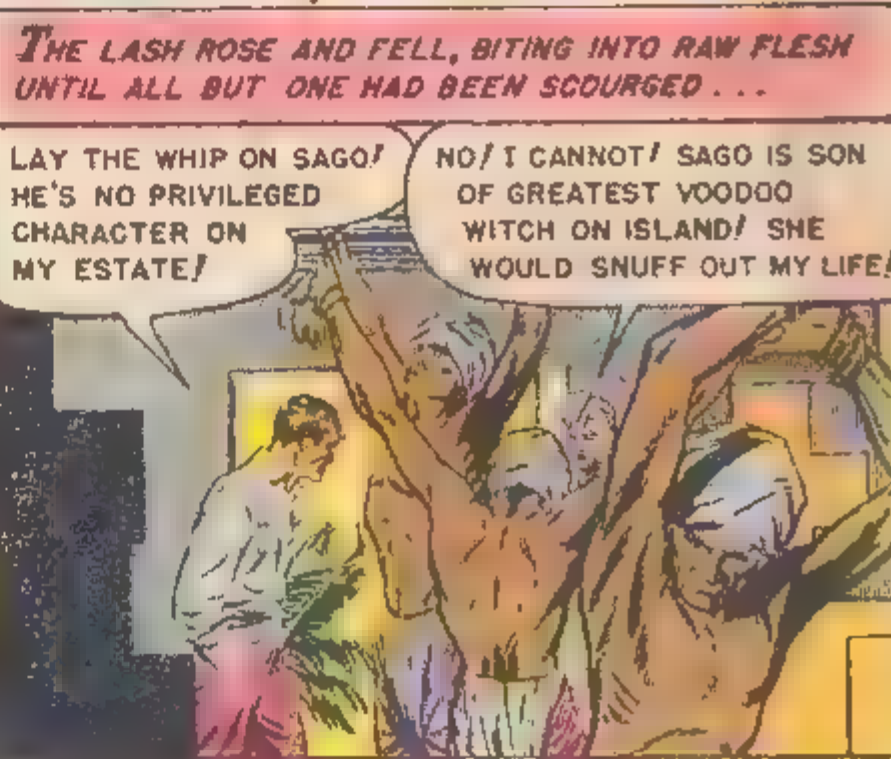
TIE THEM UP QUICKLY! IT IS THE MASTER'S WISH!



THE LASH ROSE AND FELL, BITING INTO RAW FLESH UNTIL ALL BUT ONE HAD BEEN SCOURGED...

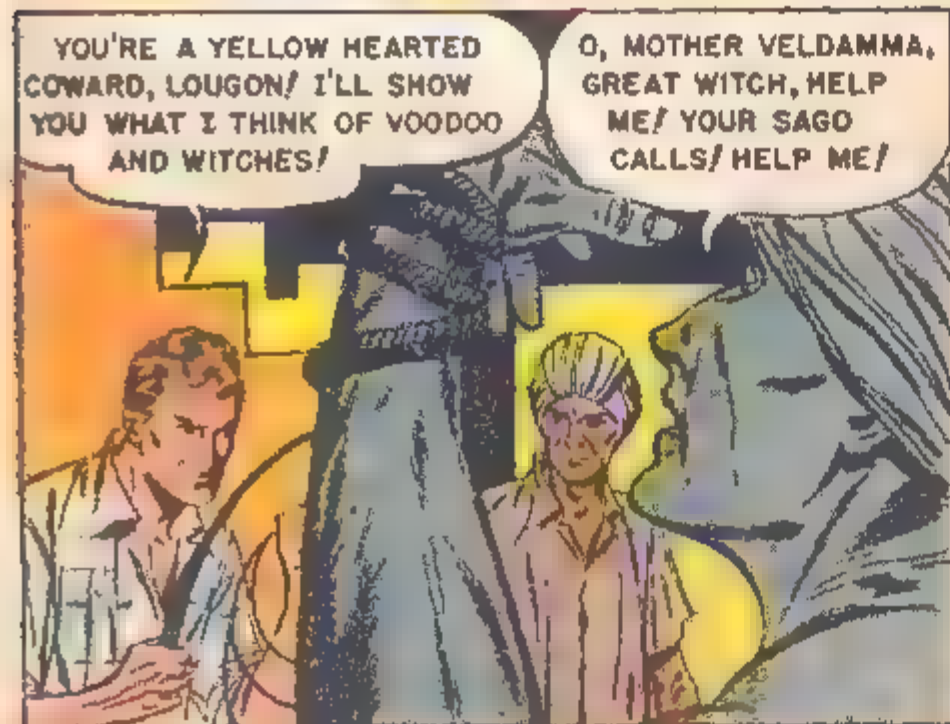
LAY THE WHIP ON SAGO! HE'S NO PRIVILEGED CHARACTER ON MY ESTATE!

NO! I CANNOT! SAGO IS SON OF GREATEST VOODOO WITCH ON ISLAND! SHE WOULD SNUFF OUT MY LIFE!



YOU'RE A YELLOW HEARTED COWARD, LOUGON! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I THINK OF VOODOO AND WITCHES!

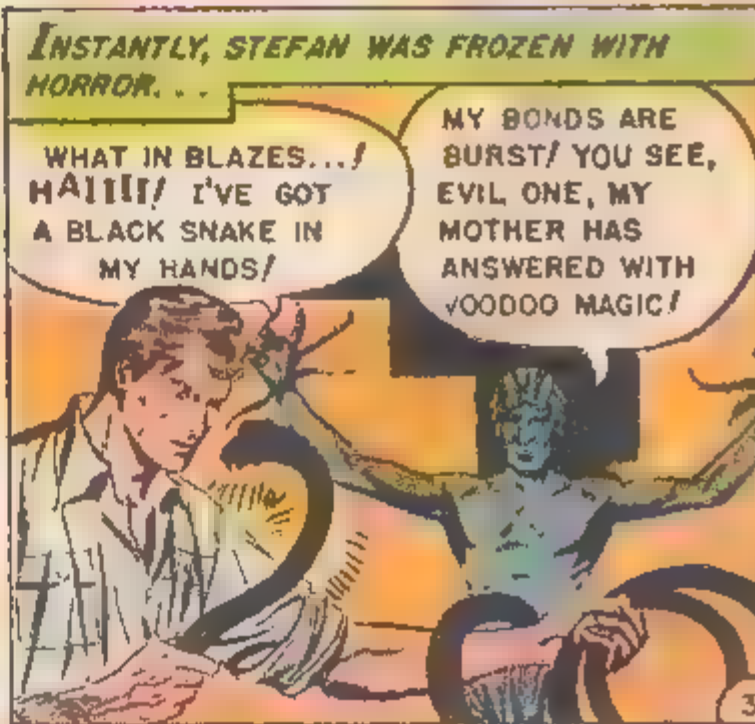
O, MOTHER VELDAMMA, GREAT WITCH, HELP ME! YOUR SAGO CALLS/ HELP ME!



INSTANTLY, STEFAN WAS FROZEN WITH HORROR...

WHAT IN BLAZES...! HAAAA! I'VE GOT A BLACK SNAKE IN MY HANDS!

MY BONDS ARE BURST! YOU SEE, EVIL ONE, MY MOTHER HAS ANSWERED WITH VOODOO MAGIC!



THE HORRIBLE THING NO, NO /
IS ... (GASP!) ... WE DARE
CHOKING ME / NOT TOUCH
DON'T STAND VODOO SIGN /
THERE — IT IS FORBIDDEN.
AHHGH! IT IS YOUR OWN
HELP ME! FAULT!
GET IT OFF!



JUST AS SUDDENLY AS THE
WRITHING SNAKE HAD APPEARED,
SO MOMENTS LATER . . .

IT'S GONE! ONLY MY WHIP IS
HERE! IT COULDN'T HAVE
BEEN MY IMAGINATION, BECAUSE
I STILL FEEL THE PAIN / SAGO
WILL PAY FOR THIS DIRTY
TRICK WITH HIS NECK!



THE FOLLOWING MORNING . . .

THERE HE IS /
GRAB HIM / I AM
THE ONE RESPON-
SIBLE FOR THIS
ACT / YOU NEED
HAVE NO FEAR /
HURRY, BEFORE
I TURN THIS
PISTOL ON YOU!

WE HURRY,
BUT YOU DO
WRONG / YOU
WILL REGRET
EVERY
SECOND OF
YOUR LIFE...
IF YOU GO
THROUGH
WITH THIS,
MASTER!



BEFORE SAGO COULD ESCAPE . . .

I'M GOING TO HANG YOU RIGHT IN
FRONT OF MY PATIO, SAGO / YOU'LL
BE AN OBJECT LESSON FOR ALL
THOSE WHO THINK THEY CAN
OPPOSE ME!

GARR!
YOU WILL BE
CURSED, AND
EVERYTHING YOU
OWN WILL BE
DESTROYED! YOUR
FATE WILL BE A
THOUSAND TIMES WORSE
THAN HANGING!



BUT THE DEED WAS DONE AND STEFAN
GLOATED . . .

NOW LET THEM TRY THEIR VODOO ON ME /
I'LL SIT HERE ALL NIGHT IF NECESSARY, TO
PREVENT SAGO'S BODY BEING CUT DOWN /
THIS WILL TEACH THEM WHO IS MASTER
OF THE HOOTNER ESTATE!



AS MIDNIGHT STRUCK, STEFAN ROSE IN STARK
TERROR FROM HIS CHAIR AS HE SAW . . .

BY ALL THE DEVILS IN... IT—
IT'S FANTASTIC... UNBELIEVABLE!
A DEAD MAN COMING TO LIFE,
SNAPPING HIS ROPE! HE WON'T
GET FAR THOUGH! I'LL RIDDLE
HIM WITH RIFLE FIRE!

GREAT
VELDAMMA...
YOU HAVE
ANSWERED MY
CALL! I COME
TO YOU AT
ONCE!



WHAT IS ALL THIS CURSED BUSINESS ABOUT?
I — I HIT HIM FOUR TIMES AND STILL HE WON'T
GO DOWN! I CAN'T FOLLOW HIM INTO THE
FOREST! I WOULDN'T DARE!



LATER, DEEP WITHIN THE FOREST,
SOMEONE PUTS AN END TO
VELDAMMA'S CAMP.

A LAME BAT'S TOOTH, AND
SICK TOAD'S BLOOD... INTO THE
POT YOU GO! AND NOW VEL-
DAMMA WILL TEST HER GREATEST
POWERS TO MAKE HER MISTRESS
OF THE ISLAND! MY SON SHALL
BE AVENGED... / YAGOO!
NULGAA FAREE EGAN! ...I
MIX DUST OF THE
HANDRAKE ROOT!



OLD VELDAMMA
GONE! HEAR
HER SCREAM?
SHE SWALLOW
UP IN MAGIC
SMOKE.

HAREE!
VOODOO
SPIRIT GOT MY
BODY... / TEAR
ME APART...
MAKE ME OVER...
AAAA!!!



WHEN THE SMOKE LIFTED...

LOOK! THAT'S
REAL DEVL
VOODOO!
VELDAMMA
VANISHES
AND WE GET
THIS BEAUTIFUL
GIRL IN HER
PLACE!

YES, I HAVE
CHANGED BUT
I AM STILL VEL-
DAMMA! COME
CLOSER NOW AND
LISTEN TO MY
PLANS TO MAKE
THE EVIL
HOOTNER WISH
HE WERE DEAD A
THOUSAND TIMES!



SOON AFTER VELDAMMA HAD OUTLINED HER PLAN...

HELP! SAVE ME! THEY
WANT TO KILL ME! HELP!



SOUNDS LIKE A CRY FOR
HELP! THERE'S A GIRL
HEADED THIS WAY,
FOLLOWED BY
A MOB!



THEY WANT TO
SACRIFICE ME
TO THEIR
VOODOO GOD!
I DO NOT WANT
TO DIE! PLEASE
SAVE ME!

DON'T WORRY!
I'LL SHOW THEM
MY RIFLE'S
STRONGER
THAN ALL
THEIR VOODOO!
YOU'RE SAFE
RIGHT HERE!



WHEN THE NATIVES WERE
ROUTED...

SO YOU'RE VELDA!
I'M GLAD YOU CAME
TO ME FOR HELP!
I'VE NEVER SEEN
ANYONE SO
BEAUTIFUL!
YOU CAN STAY
HERE AS LONG
AS YOU WISH!

AND I
DON'T KNOW
HOW TO
THANK YOU,
MR. HOOTNER!
IF NOT FOR
YOU... OH, I'M
AFRAID TO GO
OUT THERE
AGAIN!



AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS HAD
PASSED...

THE PLACE IS DIFFERENT SINCE
VELDA'S BEEN AROUND! SHE'S
INTOXICATING! I CAN'T LIVE
WITHOUT HER! I MUST ASK HER
TO MARRY ME!



THEN YOU WILL MARRY ME, VELDA! IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL THING THAT'S HAPPENED TO ME SINCE I CAME TO THE ISLAND! COME... ASK FOR ANYTHING AND IT SHALL BE YOURS!

YOU MAY NOT LIKE WHAT I ASK! I MUST TELL YOU IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE A NATIVE CEREMONY! IT WILL SOFTEN THEIR ANGER AGAINST ME AND ENABLE US TO LIVE IN PEACE!



YOU SEE, YOU'VE CHANGED YOUR MIND! YOU DON'T REALLY LOVE ME!

NATIVE CEREMONY! ALL THAT CRAZY MUMBO JUMBO...! YOU REALLY DON'T—OH, ALL RIGHT THEN WE'LL HAVE A NATIVE MARRIAGE CEREMONY! I'LL DO ANYTHING TO PLEASE YOU!



So, ON THE NIGHT OF THE NEXT FULL MOON...

IT'S NOT AS BAD AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE, VELDA! WHEN DOES THE CEREMONY BEGIN?

IN A FEW MINUTES! WE MUST GO TO THE CAULDRON AND HOLD HANDS ACROSS IT!



AND FOLLOWING HER INSTRUCTIONS...

VELDA, THOSE DRUMS! THEY'RE BEATING A VODOO RHYTHM! IS THAT ALL PART OF THE CEREMONY?

YES, THIS IS HOW IT MUST BE DONE!...AND WITH THIS SACRED POWDER WE ARE JOINED IN WEDLOCK, NEVER TO BE PARTED, HERE OR IN THE HEREAFTER!



As the HELLISH INGREDIENTS WERE CAST INTO THE CAULDRON...



A SCREAM ROSE FROM STEFAN'S THROAT AS THE STAGGERING TRUTH BURST UPON HIM...

EEYAAA!
YOU'RE NOT VELDA!
YOU MUST BE —

VELDAMMA, THE VODOO WITCH! YES, STEFAN YOU ARE MARRIED TO A WITCH, NOW AND FOREVER! COME, HUSBAND... YOU MUST KISS THE BRIDE! HA HA HA!





NO! NO! YOU'RE LOATHSOME, VILE! LET ME GO! YOU DEVIL'S SPAWN!

NOW, YOU ARE NOT SO PRETTY YOURSELF! HO, FETCH A MIRROR FOR MY HUSBAND! LET HIM SEE HOW HIS EVIL HEART IS REFLECTED IN HIS FACE!



WHEN STEFAN SAW HIS OWN IMAGE

AAAAA, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME! WHY HAVE I BEEN CURSED WITH THIS LEPER'S FACE?

YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD DESTROY VOODOO, CHANGE US OVER IN YOUR IMAGE! BUT OUR POWER IS STRONGER! NOW YOU AND EVERYTHING YOU OWN SHALL ROT AND CRUMBLE TO DUST!



I WON'T STAY IN THIS HELLISH PLACE! I'LL GET OUT, GO BACK TO EUROPE AND TEAR THIS CURSE OUT OF MY LIFE!

IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR A DEAD MAN TO ESCAPE FROM HIS GRAVE! YOU'LL NEVER GO BACK! NEVER!



SHE'S RIGHT...! AAAIII! THE PILLARS OF MY HOUSE CRUMBLE UNDER MY TOUCH! I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LEAVE! BUT MAYBE...

THERE IS A WAY OUT!

ARE YOU CONVINCED, MY HUSBAND? AH, NO, YOU SEE THE RIFLE! A BULLET THROUGH YOUR EVIL HEAD MIGHT SAVE YOU! HA HA HA!



BUT AS STEFAN SEIZED THE WEAPON

AAAREEE! THERE IS NO WAY OUT FOR ME! I AM JOINED IN LIVING DEATH WITH THIS CREATURE OF DAMNATION!

NOW YOU KNOW THE TRUTH! YOU ARE NO LONGER MASTER OF THE ISLAND, STEFAN HOOTNER! YOU ARE MY SLAVE!



YEARS PASSED AND WHERE ONCE THE FINE MANSION AND RICH FIELDS OF THE HOOTNERS STOOD...

TEN YEARS AND ALL I EVER OWNED IS GONE. HERE I SIT AN OUTCAST FROM THE WORLD CURSED BY A STRANGE QUIRK OF FATE...

YES, VELDAMMA... I'M COMING!

STEFAN, COME HERE AT ONCE!



HURRY, YOU STUPID CLOD! FETCH SOME FIREWOOD BEFORE I TURN YOU TO STONE! I HAVE A NEW FEAT OF MAGIC I MUST TRY!

NO, PLEASE DON'T PUNISH ME VELDAMMA! I'LL BRING THE FIREWOOD AS FAST AS I CAN!

THE END

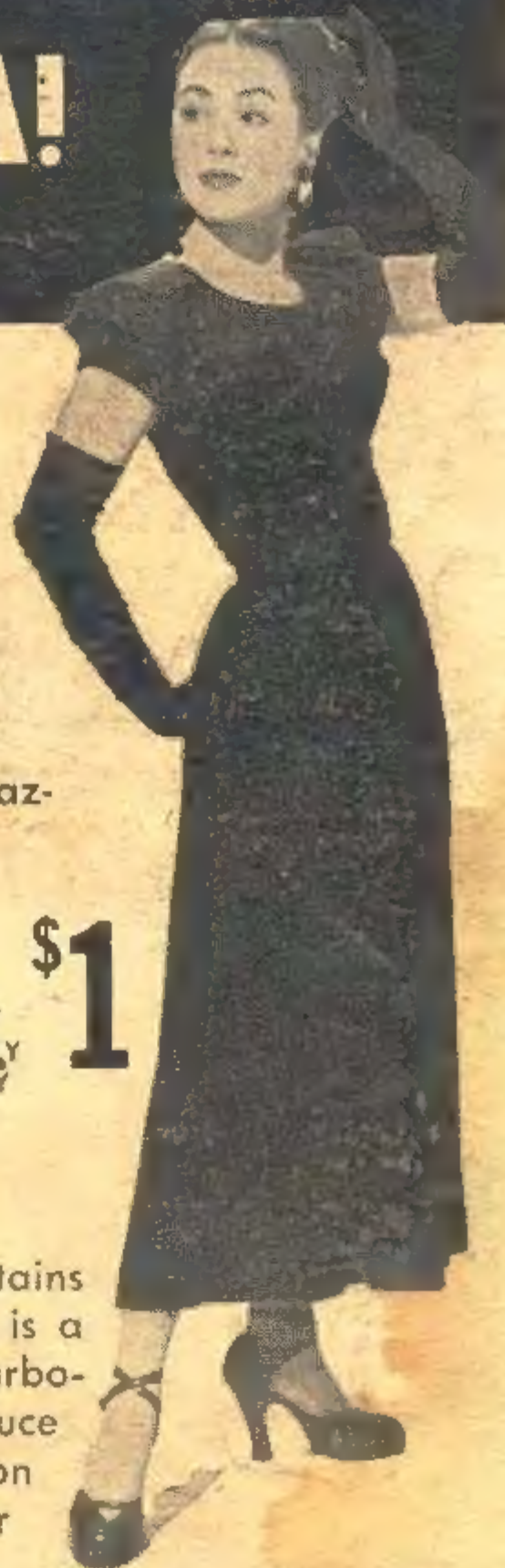
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Not one child yet has failed to go for and ask for more MORE-WATE tablets! Stop worrying about children not eating enough, give them MORE-WATE tablets—it stimulates their appetite . . . they eat it like candy!

summer and going to parties and socials because it means everyone will enjoy themselves and you won't. Don't be a wall-flower, because you have a figure like a broomstick! Gain more weight!

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Just mail us your name and address, and \$1.00 cash, check or money order. You will receive a 10 day supply of MORE-WATE tablets and plan, postage prepaid.

☐ Send me 30 day supply plus an extra 10 day supply (that's a 40 day supply) for \$2.98. I understand that if I am not delighted with MORE-WATE tablets and plan, I can return the 30 day supply in 10 days for full purchase price refund, and keep the 10 day supply without charge.

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